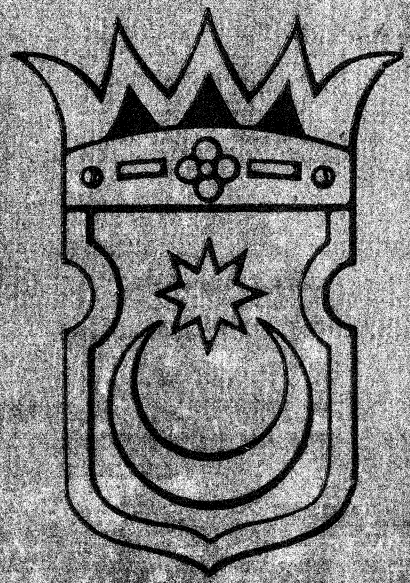
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



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BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
SOME WAYSIDE WANDERINGS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Dalmatia

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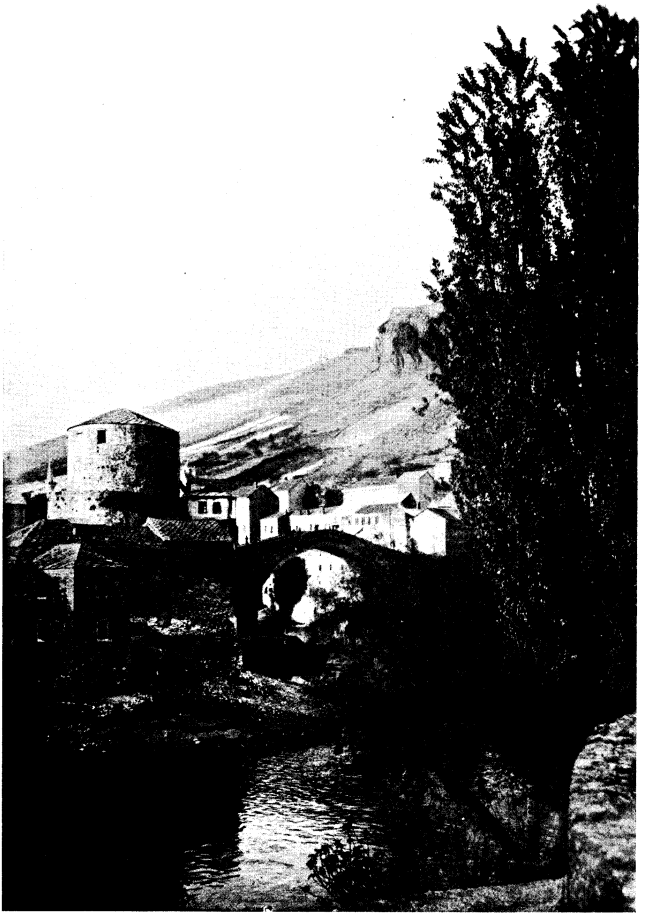

A BIT OF OLD MOSTAR

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SOME WAYSIDE WANDERINGS

BY MAUDE M. HOLBACH

WITH 48 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY O. HOLBACH AND A MAP

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PREFACE

IT is fitting that I should write the preface to this book from Dalmatia, which was my first love in the Balkans, and through which I learnt to know her sister lands, Bosnia and the Herzegovina. They are three twin sisters of almost equal though varied charms; and when you are privileged to know one, it follows as a natural consequence that you wish to know all three.

Nature, I think, never intended them to be separated, for the inland countries need the outlet to the sea, and the coast land needs the supplies of the back country. From the purely æsthetic point of view even they supply each other's deficiencies—Bosnia has the primeval forests, Herzegovina the grandest mountain scenery, Dalmatia the sunny shore and island-studded coast. Climatically also they are suited to be visited one after another, beginning with Dalmatia, if your visit is in the spring; for when the heat begins to be oppressive there, a few hours' train jour-

ney transports you to Mostar, where the season is some weeks later, and thence on to the much more northerly climate of Bosnia, where you can spend the whole summer, if you will, wandering in its mountains and forests, and when you weary of this gipsy life, returning to civilisation and comfort at Bad Ilidze.

If your journey be in the autumn, naturally you will reverse the order of the countries. September and October are delightful months for Bosnia, as the autumn tints are at their best during the latter month, and are only equalled by those of the American continent. In Herzegovina you will find blue skies and sunshine throughout November, and I write this from Ragusa in mid-December, sitting on my balcony enjoying the sunshine of mid-summer, and looking across a summer sea over the ancient towers and walls of the mediæval town, which I described in my previous book on Dalmatia as "a dream city by the sea."

MAUDE M. HOLBACH

IMPERIAL HOTEL,
RAGUSA, DALMATIA.
December 10th, 1908

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BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
SOME WAYSIDE WANDERINGS

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

I—BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA —INTRODUCTORY

A LAND of green pastures and rushing waters, of wooded hills and forest-clad mountains, a primitive pastoral land, where shepherds still play upon their flutes and shepherdesses wander with distaff in hand spinning as they watch their flocks; a land untouched by the fret and hurry of modern life, still wrapped in ancient peace: such was my first impression of Bosnia. I expected something different—perhaps a wild mountain land inhabited by a half-savage people showing still the traces of oppression, for I remembered that it is but thirty years ago since Bosnia was rescued from Turkish rule; and as I looked around me in

this smiling country, and saw the old Turkish towns with their picturesque but comfortable-looking houses standing in fruitful gardens, noted, too, that in spite of all Europe has heard of the persecution of Christians in Mohammedan land, one-half of the population here remained Christian, a doubt grew in my mind as to whether the Western world has not done the Turk an injustice and painted him blacker than he deserved. Austria has done much for this country, but could so much have been accomplished in little more than a generation if the people had been down-trodden and degraded by centuries of mis-rule? Alas! my lack of knowledge of the native language stopped my investigations here, and much that went before the occupation is more or less a sealed book.

It has been rightly said that on the banks of the Save River (which you cross to enter Bosnia) the two great currents of civilisation meet: one flowing from the West, the other from the East—the first advancing as the latter retires. The traveller who wants to study the evolution of a people will have here a fruitful field.

In spite of my inability to converse with them, the Bosnians made upon me the impression of being an intelligent people—I judge them from their faces and from their readiness to understand gestures when words fail. More than one Austrian official, who came into close contact with the people, bore me out in this, and the success of the Government schools for fostering the native industries is another proof of it.

The Bosnians and Herzegovinians must also in their rude way be an artistic people, for the national dress is beautiful; and does not national dress evolve from a people's innate, if unconscious, sense of beauty and fitness? A Bosnian is rarely ungraceful, rarely stiff even when—most trying ordeal!—he knows he is being photographed. For this natural grace he has to thank his Oriental blood. And these same remarks apply to the inhabitants of Herzegovina in even greater measure. They are, too, remarkable for beauty of form and feature which cannot fail to strike every traveller.

The people of these countries are Southern Slavs, with the exception of some Spanish

Jews scattered about the country and bands of gypsies; there is no difference in race between the Turks and their neighbours whom we call Servians (to distinguish them from the Moslem population). The latter adopted the Moslem religion after the Turkish conquest, not, it is now pretty generally admitted, from compulsion, but to enjoy the greater privileges of the ruling race. About a third of the population is Moslem, two-fifths belong to the Servian (Greek Orthodox) Church, and the rest are Catholics. Moslems and Christians alike are very strict in their religious observances, the Moslems more conservative than in Turkey itself. It is, however, most exceptional for a Bosnian Moslem to have more than one wife.

The Servian Croatian tongue is the language of the country, but a good many of the townspeople in Mostar and Sarajevo speak German and some Italian.

I have spoken of Bosnia as a "pastoral land," and such in truth it is; but though agriculture engages the bulk of the population, there are districts entirely given up to mining. The mountains are rich in iron and copper,

and coal mines and salt mines are worked profitably. The salt mines were discovered and worked in primitive fashion under Turkish rule, but coal was not found till 1884. Both the coal and salt mines are in the neighbourhood of Tuzla. The finding of coal has naturally given an impetus to other industries, such as the sugar refineries of Usar and the mineral oil refinery at Bosna Brod.

It is greatly to the credit of the Austrian Administration of Bosnia that so much State aid has been given to fostering the native industries; probably no other country has done so much in this direction. Hotels have even been erected by the Government to assist the tourist traffic.

The great State tobacco factory at Sarajevo is one of the sights of the capital, and the typically Oriental industries of carpet-weaving and inlaying with gold and silver are taught in State schools, which for a long time were not even self-supporting. In Herzegovina there are Government vineyards where the peasants can learn the best methods of vine culture and wine making, and in both coun-

tries model farms supported by the State to give object lessons in up-to-date agriculture, under which heading tobacco growing is included.

A great deal has been said and written about the heavy taxation under Austrian rule. The taxes are, however, so far as I have been able to learn, not higher than in other parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Under Turkish rule the taxation fell only upon the Christian population ; naturally, therefore, the Moslems, long accustomed to immunity, felt themselves aggrieved under the new régime in being called upon to pay taxes at all, and preferred the old slipshod way, even though they were sometimes robbed by a Pasha in need of gold.

The Bosnian peasant's chief desire is peace, to plant his fields and reap their produce; this secure, I believe he cares little whether Bosnia be Austrian or Turkish. An incident which came under my notice at the time of the annexation shows that the Bosnians on the Servian frontier had little faith in their kinsfolk the other side. A petition was sent to Sarajevo when war was imminent, asking for

the protection of Austrian troops against Servian bands!

Another pretty story of the annexation shows the respect for authority innate in the people. The Bezirkevorsteher (civil head of the district) at Căjnica observed a young countryman (who thought himself unnoticed) reading the Emperor's proclamation bareheaded. The Bezirksvorsteher approached and asked him why he removed his fez while he read. "I read a letter signed by his Majesty, therefore I must stand bareheaded," was the simple reply.

Such stories show the trend of public feeling to be not averse to Austrian rule. From the point of view of the mere sojourner and passer-by, the administration inaugurated by the late Minister von Kally seems to have brought peace and prosperity to a land which little more than a generation ago was given up to bloodshed and sedition through the inability of the Turkish Government of that day to repress robbery and clear the country of agitators who incited the people to crime. Quite apart from any question as to the annexation being a violation of the Treaty of

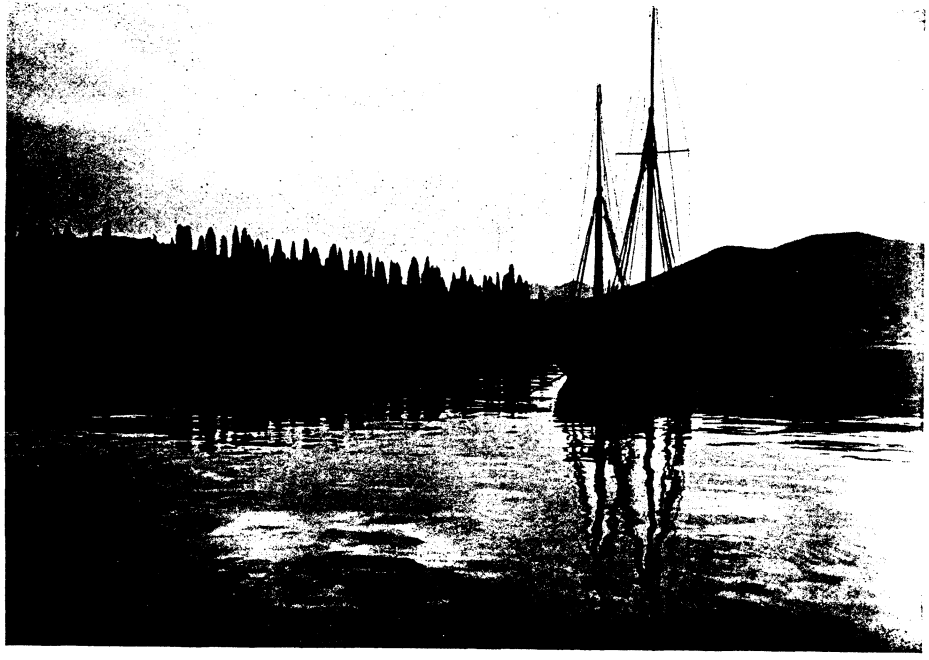
Berlin, it cannot fail to benefit the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to have a settled government, and the majority of the population, especially the townspeople, appeared to welcome the new era.

II—GRAVOSA TO MOSTAR

WE left the pretty little port of Gravosa, on the Dalmatian coast, one May morning, by a most comfortable train which takes rather less than six hours to reach Mostar, the picturesque capital of Herzegovina. The railway is a narrow gauge line, which at first ascends steeply, and from the train we had a glorious view over the Ombla river. Wild cyprus trees grow in profusion along its steep banks, and are silhouetted against the blue water below. We rose to the height of Mount Imperial, which watches over Ragusa, and crossed the mountain spur, and then the fertile Breno valley, with its green meadows and vineyards, lay beneath us—and beyond the Adriatic. But soon we bid "Good-bye" to the smiling shore and were away in the Karst —a mountain region of grey limestone, very bleak and cold in winter, very hot in summer —for the limestone reflects the sun's rays.

Stunted trees grew between the rocks, and made the bravest show they could of fresh foliage, and here and there were patches of corn already in ear. Habitations were few and far between, but a little knot of peasants in picturesque costumes was to be found at every station at which the train stopped, and shepherdesses watched over their flocks wherever there was a little herbage to be found. We saw them afar off, for they are almost all dressed in creamy white—both the colouring and fashion of their dress (which is made with trousers, not petticoats) denotes the Turkish influence, though their unveiled faces showed they were not Mohammedans.

For more than an hour we journeyed along the shores of a desolate mountain lake, shut in by barren mountains, which the guide-book told us bears the unpronounceable name of Popovopolje, and is only a lake during five months of the year. It dries up in summer so completely that the ground can be cultivated. The inhabitants of its banks must have a similar experience to the dwellers in the villages along the Nile, who are accustomed to go about on dry land half the year



GRAVOSA HARBOUR

and the other half by boat. This lake puzzled us not a little when first we saw it, for the trees growing here and there out of the water plainly showed inundation; and on the other hand, the primitive little canoes here and there on its banks showed that the inundation, if such, was expected and prepared for.

The waters are said to escape in summer through underground courses, and in proof of this a special kind of fish is found in this lake, which could not otherwise get there.

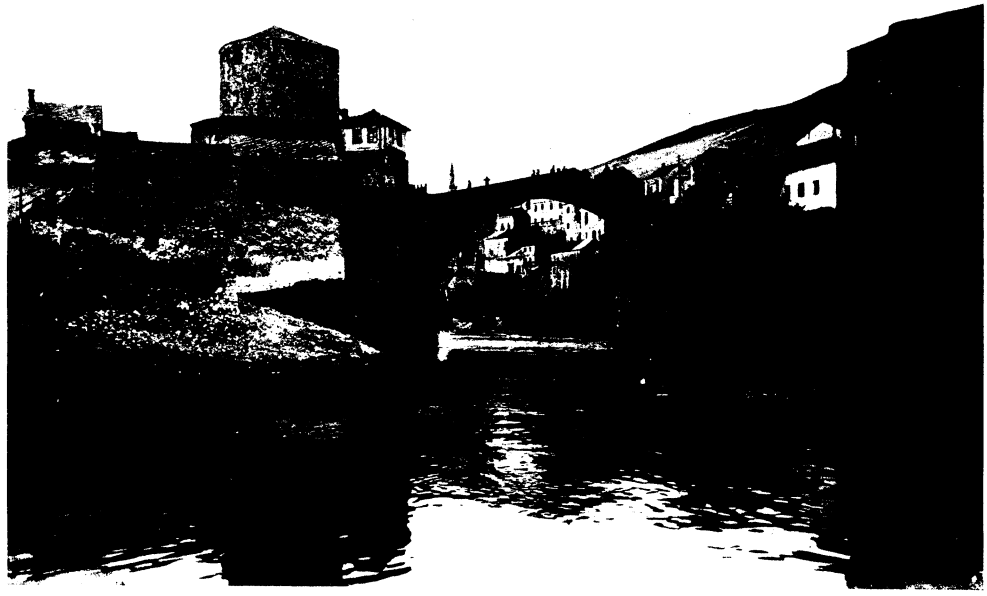
At Gabela, where the line to Metkovic goes off and another to Trebinje, there are the ruins of some old Venetian fortifications (for so far inland did the sway of the Republic extend in its golden days), and farther on there is another memory of past conquest and warfare, in an ancient fortified town climbing the mountain side, with turreted walls that recall those of Ragusa. This delightfully picturesque place goes by the name of Potchitelj, but no one seems to know much about its history, except that it had formerly the unenviable reputation of being a robbers' nest. The foaming river beneath must have been very convenient for getting rid of the un-

happy travellers who fell into the bandits' hands.

My introduction to the Narenta was a revelation. It is worthy indeed to rank with the scenic rivers of the world, yet Western Europe knows little or nothing about it! We followed its picturesque banks through the rugged gorge of Zilomislic, which it has carved through the mountains, and might well be called the Gate of Bosnia (for it is the highway to that country from the coast), and had a glimpse in passing of the once famous summer palace of the last of the Viziers of Herzegovina — Ali Pasha Rizvanbegovic — which crowns a rocky height.

We left cool spring weather behind us on the coast, and were warned to prepare for cold in the mountains; but Mostar lay basking in the summer sun when we arrived, and it was not till the cool of evening we went abroad to gather our first impressions of the capital of Herzegovina, which is one of the most picturesque towns in Europe.

Like Bideford in Devon, of which Kingsley wrote, Mostar's pride and glory, her culminating point of beauty and interest, is her bridge.



THE OLD TURKISH BRIDGE AT MOSTAR

Not "many-arched," like Bideford's, but with one great span of exceeding grace, crossing the rushing Narenta river and joining two grey old towers in which Turkish prisoners languished during the four hundred years of Moslem rule. There is a tradition that the bridge was of Roman origin, for Mostar is known to have been fortified by the Romans, and the whole surrounding country is full of Roman remains; but authorities now agree that the present bridge is of Turkish origin, dating from about the middle of the sixteenth century, built on the foundations of a Roman one. "Kudret Kemeri" (the Arch of Almighty God) is written upon it in Arabic.

Almost every world wanderer who visits Mostar has heard beforehand of Mostar's bridge, and turns his footsteps thither before he has been many hours in the semi-Oriental town on the Narenta river.

If he is fortunate enough to see it first, as I did, when the golden light of late afternoon illumines the quaint houses that cluster by the river side, and the slender high-arched bridge is silhouetted against the light, while

over it pass the white figures of Herzegovina peasant women driving sheep or cattle back from market, he will carry away a memory of a scene unsurpassed for picturesque beauty in Europe.

But thus to see it, you must descend a footpath to the green banks of the rushing river, and view it from below. Afterwards you will cross the bridge and linger on the top, looking up the stream to where the oldest and most beautifully proportioned mosque in Mostar rises on the right bank, with its minaret piercing the blue sky. An inscription gives the date of its building as 974 of the Hegira, or 1566 of our reckoning. Thirteen minarets are visible from the bridge, and I was told that there are three and thirty in the town.

Yet less than half the inhabitants are followers of Islam; the other half belong partly to the Greek Orthodox, partly to the Catholic Church. One of the most beautiful sights I saw in Mostar, or have seen anywhere in my world wanderings, was the Sunday morning Mass at the Catholic Church. One-half the church was full of the military, the

PEASANTS COMING FROM CHURCH IN MOSTAR

other half filled (all but a few seats occupied by the officers' wives) with white-veiled peasant women, with here and there a stalwart man, clad in his festal attire, kneeling reverently behind the soldiers. I have said that the scene inside the church was one of the most beautiful I ever witnessed, but I am not sure that the one outside did not equal it in picturesqueness, though the solemnity of the interior of the church and the military music was missing. Before the church was a broad tree-shaded space, and here the men waited for the second Mass, seated on the wall beneath the trees, or standing in little groups to gossip with their friends. There must have been some hundreds of them, bravely attired in the beautiful peasant costume that makes the Mostar streets like a charming scene on the stage. They all wore the crimson fez or turban (though the former prevailed), a short sleeveless jacket edged with braid showing snowy sleeves on which the sunlight played, and trousers tight to the knee and full above, with white woollen stockings and "opankas" (home-made shoes of untanned skin all in one piece and pointed at the toe) on their feet, and many a

one had a little bunch of spring flowers pinned on his fez, perhaps for a gift to his sweetheart after church. Nor must I omit to mention the silk scarves of many colours twisted round the men's waists, in which knives and pistols were formerly carried; to-day the owners find them useful as pockets.

After the first Mass was over, and the soldiers had been paraded and marched away with their band playing, the men flocked into the church and occupied the space vacated by the military. Crowds of more white-robed and white-veiled women came upon the scene and likewise entered and occupied the other side of the building, and the solemn Mass began again—this time a "peasant Mass" entirely, for which many of them had come far.

We sat under the trees and listened to the murmur of a little brook that runs hard by the church, mingled with the music of the organ and the drone of the priest; at last both ceased, the doors once more opened, and the men came out, the women (though Christians, sufficiently Oriental to take the second place) following humbly afterwards.

This was the moment for which we had

patiently waited for the camera to do its work. Not without some trepidation, for fear the youths and maidens, now mingled together in the most picturesque crowd imaginable, should turn their backs or flee at our approach, we went to work to carry away some tangible remembrance of the scene, and lo! what was our joy to find that the people had no scruple whatever about being immortalised by our little black box.

Some of them were permitted to peep at the picture in the finder, which they did with childlike joy, and one fine old man begged us by gestures to take his portrait. We wished to ask for his address, so that we could send him his photograph, but here gestures were unavailing, and it was some time before an interpreter could be found. At last a friendly passer-by, who spoke the German tongue, volunteered his good offices, and the old man's face lit up at the prospect of seeing himself in a picture; but still, he asked "How much?" and when at last he grasped the fact that he had nothing to pay, his pleasure and gratitude were touching. He shook hands with us both and salaamed before and after.

As we wended our way home through the crowded streets, I had a splendid opportunity to note the details of the women's dress. Over their long white robes they all wore sleeveless jackets of white or coloured wool, often edged with gold, and the caps under their flowing veils (which are thrown back and do not cover the face) were thickly sewn with coins. Nearly all had necklaces and rings of gold or silver, and it seemed the right, or at least the coquettish, thing for the girls to tuck a rose or other flower over one ear. Their hair was almost hidden by the caps and veils, but often neatly-braided plaits twisted round the head peeped beneath.

There can be little doubt, I think, that the veils worn by the women of Herzegovina had their origin in the Oriental custom of completely veiling the face as the Mohammedans still do to-day.

Both the men and women of Herzegovina are singularly good-looking, with dark expressive eyes and clear-cut features, and the men's close-fitting clothes show off their slim athletic figures to perfection.

The Turkish women in Mostar, however,

TURKISH WOMEN IN MOSTAR

are clad in the most hideous, uncanny-looking costume imaginable, which is a speciality of Mostar and seen nowhere else in the world. Their figures are completely hidden in an all-enveloping black mantle, with a peaked hood that stands out like a cowl over the head and projects half a foot or so beyond the face. If you meet them in the dark you may well start back in affright at such an apparition, and expect to see a death's head under the cowl! It is dangerous to peer into it too closely, for by so doing you risk giving great offence to the Moslems, and possibly being attacked by the lady's indignant male relatives; though all you could see inside the cowl, if you looked ever so closely, would be a thick veil of patterned muslin, through which the features are quite indistinguishable. The Turks of Mostar are the most conservative and orthodox in any Moslem land, presenting in this a great contrast to their brethren of Constantinople, who are beginning to allow their women greater freedom. The girls in Bosnia go unveiled till ten or eleven years of age, and are often very pretty, in spite of their hair being dyed red with henna.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The mingled influence of East and West, which meet in Bosnia and Herzegovina, give rise to curious varieties of costume. Full Turkish trousers are generally worn by the feminine Christian population of the town, in conjunction with modern blouses of European pattern—the trousers are so very full as to have almost the appearance of a skirt, and are eminently practical for going about in muddy weather. An American friend of mine was so much impressed with them, that she announced her intention of having some made on her return home.

VIEW IN MOSTAR

III—MOSTAR TO JABLANICA AND BEYOND TO JAJCE

THE mountain scenery that lies between Mostar and Jablanica is exceedingly beautiful, even viewed from the train; but only if you traverse the wild gorge of the Narenta by the carriage road and see the crags and pinnacles of rock soaring above you to a dizzy height, where eagles have their nests, while far beneath the river rushes through the defile, do you gain a fair impression of this magnificent road.

When Mostar is left behind, the road runs through a broad valley, with peeps of snow mountains on the right. You will meet many a picturesque group of peasants by the way; the younger men all wear the fez—the older cling to the turban, which is singularly becoming when its crimson folds crown a grey head. The women, driving flocks of sheep and goats to market, or watching over them in the fields, are delightfully picturesque figures in their

workaday dress of creamy white wool; beneath divided skirts, or rather trousers, their ankles appear, sometimes bare, sometimes protected by embroidered leggings; in either case opankas form their foot covering. Like the men they wear a sleeveless zouave jacket, and over their quaint little pork-pie caps a thick white linen veil, which in this district is exchanged, on Sundays and festivals, for one of embroidered net or muslin, while the trousers on such occasion are discarded for a more feminine white garment of crêpe-like texture, that reaches to the feet, and is fastened at the waist by a belt, often embroidered like the little jacket with gold or silver.

But the glorious spring morning on which we sped in a friend's comfortable motor from Mostar to Jablanica was not a festival, or at least not so marked in the calendar; though the pleasurable excitement of seeing for the first time such an interesting country under such favourable conditions made it a high holiday to me; and judging from the birds' songs and the beauty of the green spring mantle in which Dame Nature had arrayed herself, she too was making holiday.

But I am wandering from the way of which I want to tell you—that wondrous way that follows the course the Narenta river has carved out for itself through one of the grandest ravines in Europe.

A little before the valley narrows and the gorge begins we had a perfect view of the Porin Planina on our right—a magnificent mountain, at the time of which I write entirely snow-capped. The ravine begins about eighteen kilometres or eleven English miles from Mostar, and it is better to journey from south to north than in the reverse direction here, because the gorge increases in grandeur as you go north.

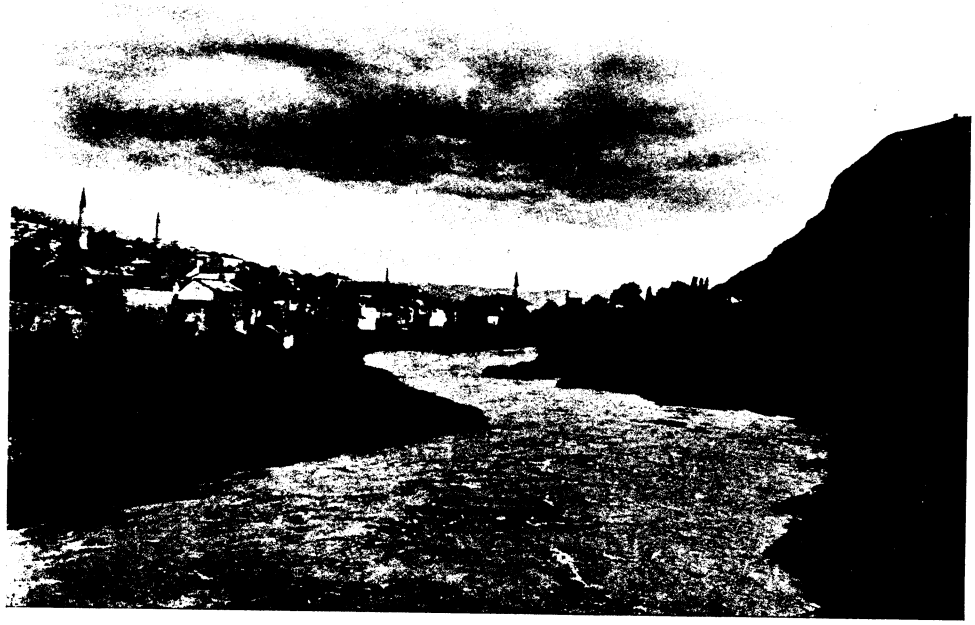
The railway (a single narrow gauge line, on which there are only two or three trains a day, so that the shriek of a railway whistle rarely disturbs these mountain solitudes) follows the left bank of the river, the driving road the right.

Close to the station of Dreznica (distant many miles from the mountain village of that name to which it gives access) a valley opens up most picturesquely on the left, and there is a magnificent view of snow peaks beyond,

while a bridge crossing the rushing river makes a perfect foreground for a picture ; the motor was stopped here and the camera called into requisition. At this spot we caused not a little excitement, for a number of very fine horses, probably purchased for the army, were being brought into Mostar and saw a motor for the first time in their lives. Having at last assured themselves that the strange, new, noisy beast they beheld was not seeking to do them any harm, but on the contrary was stopping for them to pass it, the frightened animals at last suffered themselves to be led past the car.

And then the beauty of the scenery increased ; the bare mountains near Mostar were exchanged for mountain slopes clad with young foliage, which vied in brilliancy of verdure with the meadows between us and the river.

We sped by picturesque peasant houses with high peaked thatched roofs, and almost always their owners ran out to see us pass, and smiled and doffed their red caps in greeting. Even when the approaching motor gave them trouble, in spite of all the chauffeur's



THE NARENTA RIVER

care, by frightening their horses or scattering their sheep, they took it most good-naturedly.

Still farther on, the mountains on either side assumed the most fantastic forms, rivalling the Dolomites in their crags and peaks and turrets, and calling from us exclamations of wonder and delight as the view changed at every turn of the road ; which is, by the way, like all Bosnian main roads, an excellent one, made for military purposes soon after the occupation of these Turkish provinces by Austria. It runs at one point through a tunnel in the rock which gives the date of its building 1879.

The last few kilometres of the gorge of the Narenta, before it opens into the beautiful mountain valley, in which Jablanica lies, are perhaps the finest of all ; though it is hard indeed to make comparisons here. Many waterfalls descend at this point from the walls of rock that rise on either side the river, of which the Komadina is the finest.

Then suddenly we passed through the gate of this magnificent ravine and found ourselves in a flowery land, backed by snow-capped mountains, and sped along a pleasant country

road till we saw the whitewashed houses of Jablanica before us and reached, through the long, shaded village street, the cool retreat of the shady hotel garden.

There we lunched in Elysium, beneath the flowering chestnut trees, and listened to the birds'-songs that filled the air with rapturous melody.

I know no place in Bosnia or the Herzegovina more tempting for a prolonged stay in early summer or autumn than Jablanica, nor one more likely to appeal to English tastes. Fishing, shooting, mountaineering, are all to be had here; the Narenta is full of excellent trout; game abounds in the surrounding mountains, and many interesting ascents may be made either on foot or on the sure-footed Bosnian ponies, which, as well as guides, are provided at the hotel built here by the Government. This hotel makes no pretence to luxury, but its very simplicity is charming to lovers of retirement. The garden, to which I have already alluded, entirely surrounds the house and invites you to live out of doors; needless to say, no one thinks of taking meals elsewhere from May (when the

LANDSCAPE NEAR JABLANICA

cherries are already ripe) till the middle of October.

From Jablanica you should make one of the most interesting excursions in Herzegovina—the ascent of the Prenj ; either returning to Jablanica the following day, after sleeping at one of the tourist huts on the summit, or taking it *en route* to Sarajevo, in which case the descent is made to Konjica, a delightful old Turkish town with a bridge that rivals that of Mostar, and should on no account be missed.

The Prenj is rather a group of mountains than a mountain ; its highest peak, the Zelena Glava, reaches the height of 6700 feet, and can only be climbed by experienced mountaineers ; but a good bridle-path goes all the way to the tourist huts, of which there are two on the mountain. In the Bosnian tourist huts, except on Trebevic, there is no attendant, and travellers take the key and shift for themselves ; but that rather adds to the fun ! A path has just been made by the tourist club to the summit of the Cvrstnica, the highest peak in Herzegovina, which has an elevation of considerably over 7000 feet. It is not the

height, however, but the fantastic forms of these mountains that make them remarkable ; they may well be called "the Dolomites of the Balkans." Words give but little idea of their bizarre forms and wild beauty.

I think all lovers of nature will agree with me, that to take the road and not the rail is the way to see a country—no matter whether the former be traversed on foot or on horseback, or by carriage or motor. I know nothing more tantalising than to be whirled through glorious scenery where you long to linger and let the scene sink into your memory, knowing, perhaps that you will, in all probability, never pass the same way again ! This being so, I would advise others to do, if possible, what we regretted not having done, and drive from Jablanica over the Maklan Pass to Bugogno, thence by rail to Dolnji Vakuf and Jajce, which most enchanting spot is a point of pilgrimage for every traveller in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has otherwise to be reached by a very slow train, taking six to eight hours from Sarajevo. By driving from Jablanica you avoid going twice over the same ground, and also save the train journey to Sarajevo—over

five hours by the fastest express—besides seeing some magnificent scenery that lies off the beaten track—if any track can be called beaten yet in this part of the Balkans.

The road is so good that, in spite of the height to which it ascends, to cross the mountains, even bicyclists may attempt this way. You pass through the celebrated valley of the Rama, where the vegetation is semi-tropical, and cross the river, which here forms innumerable cataracts, by an ancient Turkish bridge that marks the border between Herzegovina and Bosnia. Between the valley of the Rama and the Turkish village of Prozor, which is the half-way station, the road runs through narrow defiles and wild mountain scenery; but the finest views are beyond Prozor on the serpentine road that crosses the summit of the pass at a height of about 3700 feet, and then descends to Gornji Vakuj through virgin forest.

IV—JAJCE

THE beauty and romance of Bosnia reach their culminating point in Jajce, the royal town of the Bosnian kings which saw so many vicissitudes in the Middle Ages. History relates that at the beginning of the fifteenth century it was founded by Hrvoja, and documents bearing his signature still exist, which were dated from Jajce in 1411 and 1412; fifty years later it had become a place of great importance under King Stefan Tomasevic, and the story of his cruel fate at the Turkish conquest is one of the most tragic in the dark records of those days.

When the great armies of the Sultan Mohammed II were approaching, the Bosnian king was at his castle of Bobovac. Leaving one of his commanders to defend this fortress, the king retired to Jajce, but Bobovac fell, and the Sultan sent a force of twenty thousand cavalry to the royal city with orders to capture

STREET SCENE IN JAJCE

the king. Stefan Tomasevic heard, however, in time of their coming, and fled once more to the castle of Sokol, and then, as he saw that Sokol could not well be defended against such a force, to the almost invulnerable fortress of the ancient Clissa on the Save river. The ruins of Kjuc are built upon a rock rising so precipitously from the torrent beneath that on three sides it is absolutely inaccessible, while the fourth was capable of defence by quite a small force. The Turkish commander, Mahmud Pasha, learnt from a peasant where the king had taken refuge (the story goes that Stefan Tomasevic was betrayed for a cake), and came to the banks of the Sanna, but saw at once that, even with his overwhelming numbers, he had little chance of capturing by force a fortress so wonderfully protected by nature, nor could he enter on a prolonged siege to starve the defenders out, for his own army was not equipped for such tactics.

In this dilemma he resolved to make terms, and offered the Bosnian king, in the Sultan's name, his own life and those of his relatives, promising, moreover, that another province of equal value would be given him in place of

Bosnia ; these terms of surrender he confirmed in writing by a sworn oath.

Stefan Tomasevic took the tempting bait and capitulated, as did also his uncle who had entrenched himself in another fortified castle in the neighbourhood, and they returned with the Turkish army to Jajce, where the Sultan was overjoyed at the success of his General, but less pleased with the conditions of the king's surrender. Even a Sultan of those days could not immediately repudiate a sworn oath taken in his name ; but Mohammed sought for a good excuse to release himself from it, and as his religious adviser, the Ulema, obligingly told him that his first oath to slay the king absolved him from that given by Mahmud Pasha, and moreover that a lord was not responsible for promises made by his servant without his sanction, the Sultan's conscientious scruples were soon done away with and the death of Stefan Tomasevic determined upon.

But the victim was not at once informed of his impending fate ; he was first persuaded to sign a royal edict directing the Bosnian fortified towns (tradition says they were no less

than seventy in number) to lay down their arms. The whole country being thus brought into the Sultan's hands he had no more use for the man he had betrayed, and Stefan Tomasevic was first flayed alive and then decapitated on the Carevopolji near Jajce.

The grave of the last king of Bosnia was discovered in 1888 by Dr. Treehelka of the Sarajevo Museum. It would perhaps be more correct to say that a roughly-hewn stone by the wayside, on the Hum, spoken of for centuries as "Kraljevski" (the king's grave) by the peasantry, was removed in that year and excavations made to ascertain if there was any truth in the local tradition. On lifting the covering stone (on which some Christian hand had rudely carved, doubtless at considerable personal risk, a little cross with perhaps a prayer for the repose of the soul of the murdered king) nothing was visible at first but blocks of stone, but on these being removed the skeleton of a man was found beneath. Everything confirmed the accounts of the mutilations of the king's body. The corpse had been laid in the ground naked, for there was not a shred of any clothing

found, only a fragment of an iron link upon the foot, and the head was severed from the trunk. The bones, moreover, were asserted by experts to have been those of a young man under the middle height, a description which perfectly accords with that of Stefan Tomasevic, and the skull to have the same formation as that shown in his pictures, of which two exist, one in the gallery in Agram, and the other in a Franciscan monastery at Sutjeska. So after the lapse of over four centuries the remains of the last Bosnian king were carried with honour worthy of his rank to rest in the church of the Franciscans at Jajce.

But Ottoman rule did not last here uninterruptedly from the time of the first Turkish conquest: the town was so important a strategical point that it bore the brunt of much fighting. In the very year of the Sultan Mohammed II's triumph, 1413, the Hungarian king, Mathias Carvinus, wrested Jajce from his grasp after an eight weeks' siege. Thus treachery received its reward, and Stefan Tomasevic was avenged. Over and over again the Turkish armies appeared before Jajce during the

next sixty years, and again and again they were beaten back by the Hungarian defenders, who performed prodigies of valour.

One more story of the battles that raged round Jajce I must tell you; it was in 1520, at a time when Servia and the greater part of Bosnia had already been conquered by the Turk. Zwornik—the key of the Drina—fell, and then Tesanj, another important strategical point; but Jajce was brilliantly defended by the grey-headed commander, Peter Keglevic, and the Turkish army, fifteen thousand strong, was repulsed. Yet hardly had the gallant little garrison breathing time before their determined foe was once more at their gates, under the leadership of Usref Pasha, who had with him the Pashas of Epirus, Sinan, and Belgrade, with their joint armies. The siege lasted long and Jajce still held out; but there were signs that the besiegers were preparing to give up what seemed a fruitless task and retreat whence they had come. It was then that Peter Keglevic sent out spies, and learnt the apparent preparations for departure in the Turkish camp were designed to throw him off his guard, while the enemy was secretly preparing scaling ladders

in the woods to be used for a night assault. He was as quick-witted as he was brave, and met ruse with ruse. A detachment of his men were sent out also to hide in the woods and be ready at a given signal, the sound of a cannon shot, to fall upon the men with the scaling ladders. Nor was this all; it was the eve of a festival on which, in times of peace, the women and maidens of the town were wont to dance on the level ground outside the city gates to the sound of the "gusla."

On a moonlight night, fitting for dance and song, the brave women made merry as if there were no foe within gunshot. The Turks, approaching with their ladders to scale the walls, saw the dancing women and rushed upon them, throwing away their ladders in their haste each to secure a prize—when lo! a gun boomed from the fortress, the hidden Hungarian soldiers came upon the Turks from behind, while those in the castle rushed forth —the women even drew forth the weapons they had concealed upon their persons, and the besiegers were cut down to a man.

Yet once again was Jajce besieged, and once again the Turk repulsed under the brave

Peter Keglevic, and this time the siege lasted eighteen months. The people were starving, for all the surrounding country was occupied by the Sultan's armies, and food supplies cut off. In the last extremity a messenger was sent out who contrived to pass through the Turkish cordon and at last reached Budapest. His story of the sufferings of the besieged made a deep impression on the king and his nobles, and especially on the Count Frankopan, who immediately volunteered to go to the relief of the beleaguered city. In his letter to his friend the Doge Dandolo of Venice, the count gives an account of his expedition, which started from Budapest on the eighteenth of April, 1525, but did not reach the banks of the Save till June; for the count, knowing he could not force his way through the Turkish hosts with the little army with which he started, had to find recruits as he went along, and persuaded many of the great nobles of Hungary and Croatia to join him with their retainers. Of such great importance was the expedition that the Pope promised absolution to any who took service in the army going to the relief of Jajce, where the forces of the

infidels were arrayed against those of Christendom. When at last he came up with the Turkish army, Frankoplan found himself at the head of 6000 men, and with this gallant little band—hardly a third of the Turkish hosts—he put the latter to flight and saved Jajce.

It was the irony of fate that so much heroism should have but postponed the evil day for a few more years, and that in 1527, after Hungary had suffered defeat at the great battle of Mohacs, brave little Jajce too had to yield to the voracious foe that had hungered for it so long, and was swallowed up in the vast Ottoman Empire.

I have told you so much of Jajce's past that you may be able to picture something of those stirring times when you enter her mediæval gates and stand within the walls of the ancient castle that was the scene of Peter Kaglevic's gallant defence. It always seems to me that the ruin without a story is but an empty shell, as unsatisfying and shorn of human interest as the land, however beautiful, that has no history!

You see the castle first, crowning a height

as you approach the town, which you enter through a mediæval gateway in the wall that is one of the most picturesque points. As your eyes were drawn to the grey pile from afar, so I think your feet will find the upward path that leads within its walls before you have been many hours in Jajce.

It may be that, on nearer view, it will disappoint you—it surely will unless you are of those gifted with imagination to recall the past; but to me a place where men did and dared and hoped and suffered so much in a bygone day will ever be consecrated ground.

Tradition says that before the Turkish conquest a royal palace stood where the clock tower stands to-day, and that it exceeded all other buildings of that period in Bosnia for beauty, being of Venetian architecture, built by an Italian master. The story is confirmed by many a gracefully carved stone used in the walls of those portions of the castle built or repaired by the Turks; and if you care to look for them, you will find two fine Gothic capitals close together in what is known as the Plivamauer (the Pliva wall), to the right of the door, and two more are over the door of

the powder magazine, while here and there are broken rosettes such as are frequently used in Venetian architecture, and many another fragment of sculpture on which a master hand has been at work.

But even if you do not care for history or for art, the view from the castle walls will repay you for your climb, for Jajce, lying below you, is one of the most picturesque towns to be found, not alone in Europe, but anywhere in the world, and it is framed in by forest-clad mountains, like a jewel lying in a casket of dark green velvet.

V—JAJCE CONTINUED

THE sides of the hill at Jajce, on which the castle stands, are covered with quaint wooden Turkish houses, down to the very edge of the precipice beneath which the Vrbas river rushes through a wild ravine; but out of their midst rises a graceful tower, which would be more in keeping with the land of Dante—an unmistakable Italian campanile, and beside it a ruined church dedicated to St. Luke, who, according to the Bosnian monks, lived and died at Jajce. I am afraid, however, they will never be able to persuade any one outside Bosnia to believe their story. Another and more likely version is that the bones came to Jajce as part of the marriage portion of Queen Helen, the granddaughter of the Servian despot George Brankovic, who had purchased the body for the immense sum of 30,000 ducats from the Turks, it having come into their possession when they took the castle of

Rogus (to which the saint's remains had been carried for safety after the fall of Constantinople). However they came, there seems little doubt that the relics now reverenced as the body of St. Luke in St. Marks, at Venice, once rested in the church beneath the campanile which bears his name at Jajce, and that they were bought by the Serene Republic after some bargaining (in which the authenticity of the remains were called in question) from the representative of the fugitive queen, who had first sent away her most precious possessions and then escaped from Jajce and taken refuge in Italy at the time of the Turkish siege. It is not impossible that the Venetians feigned disbelief in the genuineness of St. Luke in order to lower the price, but the queen was able to prove the amount her grandfather had paid for the body, and as the Hungarian king at this point made an offer of three castles for the saint's bones, the Republic, fearing to lose so unique an opportunity, quickly came to terms. The exact sum paid is not known, but it was probably enough to support the fugitive queen in exile during the rest of her life; so in one case, at least,

JAJCE WITH THE WATERFALLS

the saint justified belief in him by rendering very substantial help.

Not far from the ruined church of St. Luke and its graceful campanile is another church that you must not fail to visit; but this time it is an underground one, hewn out of the solid rock, and locally known under the misnomer of the "catacombs."

There are no existing records to tell the story of this strange place of worship, but it seems possible that the earliest Bosnian Christians gathered here to be safe from persecution. It may be it was then a natural cave of which the possibilities were made use of by adding partition walls and roughly carving the rock into the arched doorways and domed roofs typical of the ecclesiastical architecture of that period.

If the little church was ever adorned by pictures or sculptures, they have vanished in the course of the centuries; damp has blacked the walls, and not improbably men aided nature to wipe out all records of the past, for some barely distinguishable figures were discovered some years ago under a layer of blackened plaster, that served as a clue to

connect the church with Hrvoja, the founder of Jajce. The one was a figure of a man holding in his right hand a lance, and in his left grasping a sword—the other a woman's figure holding in her left hand a lily. A coat of arms also came to light with an arm bearing a sword emblazoned on a shield. This heraldic device is unknown in Bosnia except in the armorial bearings of Hrvoja—the King of Bosnia and Duke of Spalato, who also used the lily. It is from this conjectured that he had the intention of converting the early Christian church into a royal mausoleum, which also explains the crypt beneath the church. If this were so, Hrvoja's body was never laid in the resting place he had prepared for it.

And now perhaps you have had enough of history and legend, and are impatient with me that I have not sooner hastened on to tell you of nature's wonders—the falls of the Pliva river.

For her scenic charms Jajce is as justly celebrated to-day (when in times of peace men have leisure to travel in quest of the beautiful) as she was for the warlike prowess of her

defenders during the Middle Ages, when her strong castle was the sole remaining barrier of Europe against the invading Turk.[1]

The Pliva river (swollen when I saw it in the month of May to an immense volume of water by the melting mountain snows) plunges in one mighty leap over a precipice a hundred feet in height, to join its waters with those of the Vrbas flowing through the ravine below.

Yet not alone for the height of its leap nor its volume is this glorious fall remarkable among the waterfalls of Europe, but also for the exquisite beauty of its surroundings. A platform has been erected on a spot just above the cataract—it is embowered in foliage, and from this leafy retreat, with the sound of many waters in your ears, you can watch the river rushing over its rocky bed a foaming mass of white water swirling round innumerable green islets, which are covered with mosses and ferns wet with perpetual spray ; overhead the

[1] Mr. H. C. Thomson, in his book *The Outgoing Turk*, writes : "Jajce was in a way the key to central Europe ; the Turk fearing to advance either through Hungary or the North of Dalmatia, so long as the Hungarians could endanger their flank from Jajce."

trees on the banks and the trees on the islets entwine their branches and form a canopy of living green, with here and there a bit of blue sky peeping through, like the stones in an Italian mosaic.

The little platform, perched on the very brink of the precipice, has a strange fascination for me. It is not often you get so near to a waterfall as to hear its heart beating —it is not often you feel so close to the mighty forces of nature as here. It might be a haunt of Pan in the far-off days when the world was young!

When I was told by mine host of the "Grand Hotel," that the waterfalls could be illuminated by electric light, I shuddered at the thought, for the May moon was at its full, and nature seemed profaned by the suggestion! And yet the very same night, I must confess, I went to see the sight—and I repented of my hasty judgment. The scene was indescribably beautiful, and we were grateful to the enterprising American family who had ordered the falls to be illuminated, nominally for their own benefit and that of their friends, but actually for the gratification of the whole town.

THE GREAT FALLS OF THE PLIVA RIVER

On this occasion we viewed the falls from the park opposite, and the little group of country people in their picturesque dress, dotted here and there among the trees, added not a little to the fairylike scene, as did the tiny toy houses of Jajce with their peaked wooden roofs. The whole quaint Japanese-looking town seemed to be perched on the brink of the falls, while behind it the white campanile shone out against the green and grey of the castle-crowned hill. Sometimes the light was concentrated on a particular part of the river or the fall, so that each leaf of the trees, each graceful fern frond on the rocks, was detailed and received its due meed of admiration. I was fain to admit that there is sometimes virtue in art to show the beauties of nature.

The people of Jajce are pre-eminent even in Bosnia for their delightful costumes, and the streets of the little town on a Sunday morning present a picture even more striking than those of Mostar, though individually the dress of the women is stiffer and less beautiful; the graceful transparent veil of the Herzegovinians being exchanged for one of

linen, sometimes plain, sometimes embroidered, according to the fancy of the wearer.

The Bosnians are very religious, with the childish simple superstitious religion of the Middle Ages, and the Catholic people of Jajce still cling to the custom of tattooing a cross on their hands and breast. It is said it was introduced in Turkish times to prevent apostacy, for no Christian thus marked with the sign of his faith could go over to Islam without enduring the painful operation of removing the tattooed portion of the skin. The custom, however, is limited to the Catholic population and not adopted by the Serbs, who belong to the Orthodox Church and are in a minority at Jajce.[1] As in Mostar, the scene within the churches is remarkable, the whole congregation kneeling or sitting cross-legged on the ground in Oriental fashion; many, I noticed, like the Turks in the mosques,

[1] Two-fifths of the whole population of Bosnia and Herzegovina are Serbs (Orthodox), who look to Belgrade as their head, and their devotion to their church is very great. The Catholic population call themselves Croats and they look to Agram. Unfortunately for an united Bosnia, they are bitterly opposed to one another.

ON THE PLIVA RIVER BETWEEN JAJCE AND JEZERO

came provided with prayer carpets; others spread a handkerchief upon the floor: all, without exception, were very reverent. It was evident by the crowds that assembled that the country people must come from miles round to attend the Mass, and those who found no room within were content to worship outside, so that without each door of the church was a kneeling group of figures, following the service as devoutly as if within the sacred walls.

It is curious to see how Moslem customs have had their influence on the Christians of these countries; witness that of prostrating the body in the act of worship so that the forehead touches the ground, and raising the hands, palms upwards, at the blessing; and yet another, common among the men at Jajce, of shaving the head like the Turks—not wholly, however, for in the middle is left one lock of hair which, should it happen to be very long, is plaited like a Chinaman's pigtail! This strange apparition is only seen when they remove their turbans in the church, and the origin of the pigtail remains a mystery.

After Mass the country people do their

marketing, and the young men and maidens their courting in the streets of Jajce. Many a village belle I saw, decked out with silver coins resting on her plaited hair beneath a spotless kerchief, dividing her favours between one or more turbaned beaux. Once married, the Bosnian peasant woman is content to trudge behind the man through life—(there is, indeed, a saying that when a peasant greets another he asks him first as to his own health, then that of his children, then that of his cow, and lastly that of his wife—of so little importance is the woman),—therefore I wondered at the evident coquetry and spirit of the maidens at Jajce: but it was their day—and they made the most of it!

About six miles from Jajce there is an idyllic spot, famous all over Bosnia for its sylvan beauty, named Jezero. The driving road to it follows the course of the Pliva river, which descends by many cascades from a mountain lake, and turns innumerable quaint little mills which are perched like swallows' nests along its banks. So lovely is the scenery that you will surely want to linger by the way, and for this reason will do well

to go on foot or by private carriage, rather than by the diligence—which, moreover, does not run every day.

Just before reaching Jezero, you must notice the ruins of the old fortress of Zaskopolji, which have seen more recent fighting than that of the Middle Ages, for at this spot the insurgents of 1878 were defeated by the Austrian troops. Most of the inviting tree-shaded houses of Jezero are owned by rich Mohammedans, who retire here to enjoy the *dolce far niente* life they love; and who no doubt regret the occasional advent of tourists (or shall I not rather say travellers, for the wanderers who come so far from the beaten track surely deserve the more serious and dignified appellation?) The Austrian Government has erected a little chalet here, where refreshments may be had. This chalet is a very pleasant place, standing back from the village street, in a garden by the river's brink; here you may lunch or dine alfresco on a little balcony overhanging the water, where there is coolness on the hottest day, and enjoy an epicurean feast of fresh caught trout washed down by the golden wine of

Mostar—with *café à la Turque* to follow it if you will! For fishermen Jezero is a paradise; the lake swarms with trout, and anyone who wants to linger here a day or two can sleep at the chalet, which possesses one bedchamber, simple but clean. We promised ourselves a week in this romantic spot some future day! Fortune was kind to us at Jajce, for we happened on the weekly market to which all the mountain folk come down bringing their sheep and goats. This market takes place upon a Sunday—a fact which struck me as very curious—and differed from any I have seen in Bosnia or elsewhere. In the flowery meadows beside the clear waters of the Pliva river, hundreds of shepherds and shepherdesses watched over their flocks! We came upon them suddenly, and I was really speechless for a moment with surprise and delight at the entrancing scene.

These men of the mountains are splendid specimens of humanity—tall and supple of limb, with finely cut features and dignified mien. Many of them wore coats of sheepskin—wool outside—over their shoulders, but others were in the short sleeveless jackets

SHEPHERDS NEAR JEZERS

that are their summer garb, with gaily-coloured belts stuck with knives and turbans of scarlet. The women were in white, with aprons of Oriental work, and were plentifully bedecked with silver ornaments and coins, which sometimes literally covered the front of their bodices, and many of them carried distaffs in their hands. The afternoon sun was sinking behind the hills, the golden light that comes before sunset gilded the white fleece of the sheep and the white dresses of the women, and played on the scarlet turbans of the crowds and the vivid emerald-green of meadows; while the mountains, where already the purple shadows lengthened, rose all around dark and mysterious.

VI—JAJCE TO BANJALUKA

THE new road from Jajce to Banjaluka, which was opened in 1896, is one of the engineering feats of the world; for an almost perfect level is maintained over a distance of over forty-five miles, there being only a rise of 2 per cent in a few places—nothing more ideal for motorists and cyclists can be imagined. The road recalls that through the gorge of the Narenta, and we were lucky enough to see it under the same conditions — on a perfect summer's day and from the point of vantage of a friend's comfortable car. We did not therefore sleep at Banjaluka, which would have been necessary had we travelled by the diligence, but returned to Jajce the same evening, and still had some hours to spare in Banjaluka for sightseeing in the middle of the day.

The main difference between the roads through the defiles of the Narenta and Urbas

BETWEEN JAJCE AND BANJALUKA

is that the Herzegovinian one is distinguished for the nakedness of its barren rocks, the Bosnian one for the wealth of foliage that clothes the mountain sides.

It does not, however, follow that the latter is the finer; it is more smiling—perhaps, strictly speaking, more beautiful; but the remarkable forms of the rocks in the Narenta defile have a savage beauty of their own, and are the more impressive.

There are spots, however, on the road from Jajce to Benjaluka which are unsurpassed by any in the gorge to which I have compared it; and no traveller should visit Bosnia and Herzegovina without seeing both these marvellous mountain defiles.

One of the most charming views of Jajce, with its mediæval walls and towns, is on the Banjaluka road a mile or so outside the town. Three or four miles farther on the road enters the gorge after crossing the river, and plunges into what at first seems the pitch darkness of a tunnel (for being built with a curve the farther end of it is not visible). This would have been a disagreeable place for an accident, and the motor crawled through it as

if feeling its way along, till we were out again in the sunlight in a wild glen of exceeding beauty. Soon came another tunnel, and a longer one; almost the whole road has been made by blasting, and is hewn out of the solid rock, which, however, is covered with verdure, the trees reaching to the water's edge. At Bocac there are the remains of an ancient castle, and also of an early Christian basilica, which you have time to visit, if travelling by private carriage, while the horses are being rested; beyond here there lies the fertile valley of Aginoselo with its green fields and fruit trees. The valley narrows again to a defile which combines the charms of mountain and forest scenery—exquisitely beautiful as we saw it, when the trees were clad in the fresh verdure of May, but equally beautiful, I am sure, if not more so in October, for the autumn tints of Bosnia are unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, in Europe.

The ruins of another stronghold of the Middle Ages crown a height at the farther end of the ravine, by which it may be argued that there was some kind of a road through the valley in those far-off days. From the number

of such ruins on the heights above its rocky bed, the Vrbas almost deserves the title of the Bosnian Rhine. Very little is known about them, but Zvecaj-grad claims to have been the residence of Hrvoja in the fifteenth century. Perhaps the finest part of the whole road is just beyond here. The tremendous cliffs that rise from the river's bed are covered with dark fir forests, with here and there the fresh green of beeches ; many eagles have their homes in the inaccessible summits, and we saw some sailing high above us on the look-out for prey.

About eight miles or so before coming to Banjaluka the character of the scenery changes; wild nature is left behind, and cultivated fields and villages appear.

Banjaluka—the Baths of St. Luke—takes its name from the hot springs just outside the town, in the suburb of Gorni Scheher ; tradition says they were known from the earliest times. It would be interesting to trace their connection with the story of the evangelist having lived in Jajce !

I must confess to having been somewhat disappointed with Banjaluka, which is dis-

tinctly less picturesque than other Turkish towns. It is built in the plain and straggles over a large extent of ground, with one wide, European-looking, tree-shaded street running from end to end. There are, I am sure, from what others have told me, some quaint and very interesting bits in the Carsija (bazaar) and the gipsy quarter, but the heat was so great at the time of our visit that we had little energy for exploring the town. The seats under the trees before the Hotel Bosna (where there is an open-air restaurant) were more attractive. I learnt afterwards that such climatic conditions are most unusual in May, and the weather got cooler immediately after we left.

The history of Banjaluka goes back to the Roman times, when it was known as "Servetium." The highway from Salona on the Adriatic, through Dalmatia to Berber on the Save, passed through here, and the Roman baths are still remaining to bear testimony to its early civilisation.

According to tradition the Avars, and later the Goths, must have passed this way, when they devastated Bosnia and overran some of

the Roman colonies on the Adriatic. But it was under Turkish rule that the town first rose to any importance, on account of its strategical position. Many were the battles between the Hungarians and the armies of the Crescent that waged around its castle walls from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The old fortress is still to be seen, though half in ruins, and is used by the Austrian troops as a powder magazine.

In no part of Bosnia were the Begs more powerful and despotic than at Banjaluka, and much blood flowed in their strife with the Turkish viziers during the early part of the last century, when the feudal nobles rose in arms to protect their ancient rights and resent any change in the condition of the subject race—the Christian "rayahs."

As Mohammedanism has always been so strong in Banjaluka, it is not strange that there should be no less than forty-five mosques in the town; most are built of wood and unimportant, though picturesque, but the Ferhadija Dzamija is very beautiful. It dates from the sixteenth century, and is said to have been built with the money paid by the noble

Austrian family of Auersperg to ransom their son who had been taken prisoner by the Turks. The Christian population of Banjaluka is now almost equal in number to the Mohammedan, but against the forty-five mosques they have only three churches—two Roman Catholic and one Servian Orthodox.

Market day is the best time of all to visit Banjaluka. Its streets are then a study in costumes and a feast of colour—for hardly anywhere else in Bosnia or the Herzegovina is there such variety of dress to be seen, or such fine gold and silver ornaments worn by the women.

Silver filigree work is a speciality of the town, and can be bought reasonably in the Carsija, as well as the quaint clasps the women wear at their waists.

A striking feature of Banjaluka, even more than of other Turkish towns, is the number of Mohammedan graveyards scattered between the houses; they are eminently picturesque, but quite uncared for, and seem a little out of place to Western eyes among the abodes of the living. Imagine little odd cemeteries here, there, and everywhere among the gardens of

our English towns! But the East is the East and the West is the West—

And never the twain will meet.

I have alluded to the strategical importance of Banjaluka, which explains the large garrison the Austrians keep there, lately augmented by some of the troops withdrawn from the Sandjak Novi Bazar. The town has always had a considerable trade, and was one of the first places in Turkey to possess the advantage of a railway.

To be sure it only ran to Doberlin in pre-Occupation days, but it was to have been the first link in the chain connecting the Ægean Sea with central Europe, and may yet fulfil its destiny if the projected line is made to Salonika. Not far from Banjaluka is the famous Trappist monastery, which, strangely enough, was established on the Vrbas river while the country was under Turkish rule! Still stranger, Turkey, the traditional oppressor of the Christian, was the only country willing to take the poor monks in when they were driven forth from France and then from Germany!

The two to three hundred brethren lead

most self-denying lives, and in spite of the long hours their strict order forces them to give to religious duties, are busy, useful members of the community. They have founded an orphanage for Bosnian children, and are up-to-date farmers, cultivating their land themselves on modern methods; cheese making is a speciality of the monastery, so that "Trappist cheese" is famous all over Bosnia; and so too is the monks' home-brewed ale! It is curious to reflect that the Trappists driven out of Europe to seek a resting place in a Mohammedan land have by the Annexation acquired a home in Europe once more.

VII—FROM JAJCE TO SARAJEVO

EVEN seen from the train, which is generally so destructive of romance, I found the scenery through which we passed from Jajce to Sarajevo delightful. There are advantages in travelling by a slow train in such a country as this; for the people at the little wayside stations are immensely interesting, and the mixed goods and passenger trains are usually very long, so by selecting a carriage at the extreme end you can have the windows open without the annoyance of smoke and blacks from the engine, and not only enjoy the fresh air, but pop your head out at any moment when there is anything of unusual interest to be seen. We have even tried photographing from the train, but I cannot say that it has been very successful.

The Bosnian railroads, like the main road and bridle-paths, all follow the course of the

rivers. On leaving Jajce you bid "good-bye" to the Pliva when you cross it by the great modern bridge, which is so out of keeping with the ancient town that you regret that the model of the old Turkish bridges could not have been followed, and descend the course of the Urlas. The bridge, however, is not the most regrettable thing at Jajce from the point of view of those who visit Bosnia for the sake of its scenic beauty. The factory, owned by a company, which unfortunately acquired the rights of the immense water power, is the one blot on the landscape, spoiling an otherwise ideal spot. I am told that it employs a large number of hands, and so adds to the material welfare of the town, from which point alone it can be tolerated ; but at least those interested in promoting the tourist traffic should agitate for the prohibition of the fumes poured forth from the factory chimneys. It comes as a shock to travellers who have heard of the far-famed beauty of Jajce, to approach it through clouds of smoke in passing the factory, just before the old town comes in view from the railway.

The rail probably follows what was once a

WOMEN OF JAJCE

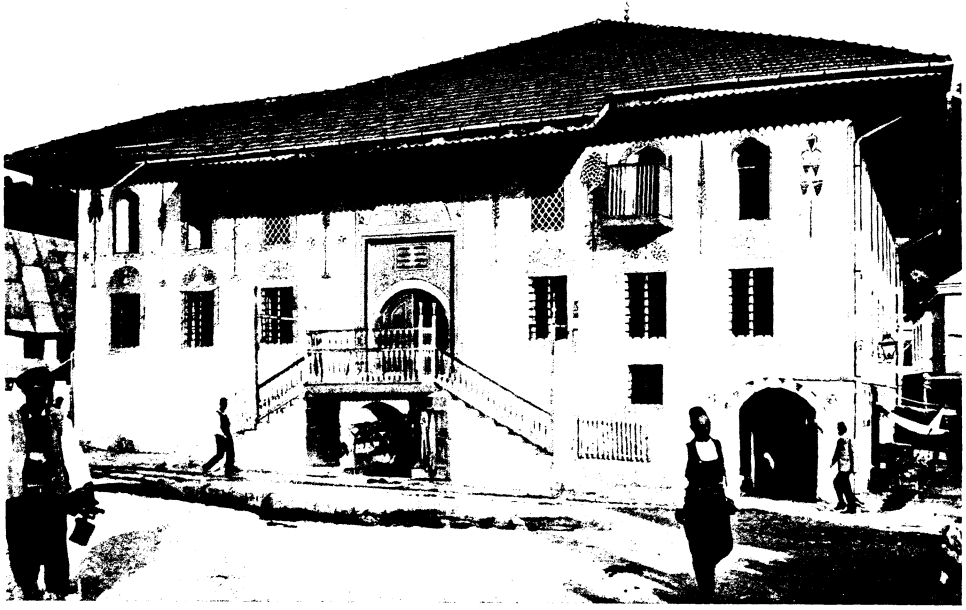
Turkish road or bridle-path, judging from the ruins of the old castles that here, as well as on the course of the Urlas lower down, crown the rocky precipices between which it flows. They are not always visible unless you keep a close look out for them, for the old walls are of the same colour as the rock. The first of these, Vinac, is close to the little station of Vijenac, about fifteen miles from Jajce.

Beyond Dolnji Vakuf the train is run on the cogwheel system, and begins to climb the mountains to Komar, the highest point on the line, which is 2400 feet above sea-level. At this little mountain station we made the acquaintance of a beautiful collie dog, whom I would recommend to your notice if you pass this way, and who will be grateful for any scraps from your luncheon basket. He is a homeless cripple who depends for his living on the contributions of passengers, and never fails to meet the train. The kindly guard, who had come prepared with a little parcel of bones, told us the dog had once been run over by a train and so lost his foot, and ever since has been a pensioner. It is amusing to watch

his tactics when the train arrives : like a two-legged beggar he travels the whole length of it, but has the disadvantage that he is not tall enough to look in at the windows, so he has to attract attention by barking.

The last time I went over this line I had not noticed the names of the stations, and was not aware that we had reached Komar, for it was in the dark ; but a well-remembered bark suddenly broke on my ear, and I opened the door to meet a smiling and appealing face. We had finished for tea all that was over from lunch, and I had nothing left but some lumps of sugar ; this, however, our four-footed friend found so much to his taste, he ran limping after the train when it moved off till the last one was thrown him. I registered a vow never to forget him again when I passed this way, and wished I could make arrangements for a daily parcel of scraps to be delivered at Komar station.

We broke our journey at Travnik, a typical Turkish town which looked so interesting from the railway that we could not resist it, and hastily decided to take the chances of there being an hotel and remain the night.



THE MOSQUE AT TRAVNIK

It has, as a matter of fact, no less than three inns which are dignified by the name of hotel, and the "Grand" is a very nice modern building in a charming situation; but "Grand" hotels do not pay in Travnik, so it had been shut up for months, and was only reopened the day of our arrival. As we were not informed of this till too late, we unfortunately went to the "Kaiser von Oesterreich," which was sadly lacking in cleanliness. The interest of Travnik, however, made up for creature comforts. We were delighted with the great mosque, which is the finest building in the town since the old Konak (once the residence of the Turkish viziers) has been restored and modernised.

The mosque is the centre of the bazaar quarter, and is a white building delicately painted in ornamental designs, of which the colouring is soft and beautiful. The pillars of the arcade are green and white, a delightful background for the red-turbaned Turks that are almost always sitting or standing in little groups before it; for the vicinity of the mosque seems to be a centre of Turkish social as well as religious life. A large part

of the old town was unfortunately destroyed by fire some years ago, and modern European houses have replaced the old ones in this quarter, so that the main street is a little disappointing. Here, however, are the graves of the viziers, in a little railed-in space beside a coffee-house, each tombstone protected from the elements by a roof or canopy. They would attract the eye of any artist by their picturesqueness, but it gives an added interest to these last resting-places of the rulers of Bosnia to know something of Travnik's history. The seat of government was moved from Bosn-Saraj (Sarajevo) to Travnik under Turkish rule probably in order to keep a firmer hand on the north of the provinces, where, as I have already said, the Begs were very powerful and fanatical.

Travnik remained the capital until 1850, when Omar Pasha put down the insurrection, headed by the feudal nobility, who had, until then, been supreme in Sarajevo, and set the viziers at defiance in this city, which he made once more the seat of government. Travnik then relapsed into insignificance, and only partially awoke from half a century of sleep

TRAVNICK FROM THE HILLS

with the advent of the railway. If you want to try and picture it in its palmy days you must climb one of the surrounding heights and choose a point of view from which the modern innovations are hidden ; then, gazing on the garden city with its mosques and minarets lying under the protecting walls of its ancient fortress, you can dream a little of the days of the proud dominion here of the Crescent and the Star.

It is strange to find the old Mohammedan city becoming a centre of Catholicism, yet such must be the result in time of the great Jesuit college which has been erected here—not, however, without some opposition on the part of the Franciscans, who were formerly the only order represented in Bosnia, with the exception of the Trappists in Banjaluka. The students at the Jesuit college are not limited to those of the Roman Catholic faith, and I was told there are many Jews among them. The higher education of the Turks is provided for in the Medresse, a very charming building with its own mosque attached, erected by the Austrian Government. This is not the only instance I have come across of mosques

being built or restored at the cost of the State in Bosnia.

The country around Travnik is beautiful, and we regretted not having time to make any excursions. There is a giant oak tree of great age near Doloc that is said to have a hollow trunk of such vast size as to give shelter to a company of soldiers! I will not vouch for the truth of the story, but such is the local report. It would have been interesting to see so wonderful a tree.

We spent some pleasant hours in Travnik, wandering in the narrow streets of the old quarter, where the quaint Turkish houses have projecting upper stories, shaded by broad eaves and harem windows of muscharabiah work in the whitewashed walls.

Here we watched the Mohammedan children at play in the streets—boys and girls together! It was sad to remember how soon the playtime of the latter would be over; many marry at thirteen or fourteen, and are then immured in the harem for the rest of their lives, only seeing a peep of the world henceforth through a veil or a hole in the lattice window of their apartments!

Some of the Turkish girls are very pretty. I remember one at Travnik especially attracted our attention. She was all in white, and her muslin blouse might have belonged to her European sisters, but in place of a skirt she wore the not ungraceful full trousers, and a diminutive round cap with flowers pinned upon it crowned her henna-dyed hair. The custom of wearing fresh flowers on fête days either pinned on the cap or fastened in the hair is common alike among the Mohammedans and Christian population of Bosnia, and is not confined to the women, for I have seen many young men so adorned for a festival.

The following day saw us again in the train on our way to Sarajevo. We travelled through a pastoral landscape that was Arcadian, of greenest meadows backed by blue mountains where herdsmen played upon their flutes as they drove the cattle home. We saw white oxen drawing primitive wooden ploughs and turning over red earth that reminded us of Devon, with white-clad, red-turbaned peasants guiding the oxen or following the plough. The notes of the flute were wafted to us by

the gentle breeze, together with the scent of the may that crowned the hawthorn trees and hedges like fresh fallen snow. Along the river banks golden kingcups shone out from the dark leaves, and blue forget-me-nots starred the grass, and in the woods wild cherry and crab-apple trees made patches of white and pink blossom among the fresh green. All this we saw and heard from our "mixed" and therefore slowest of trains, and envied not the passengers in the fastest *train de luxe*.

There were picturesque groups of peasants at every station, the men usually wearing trousers of dark blue, fitting closely below the knees, and often elaborately braided at the pockets and down the sides; their sleeveless jackets showed the loose bell-shaped sleeves of their white shirts, which were often edged with embroidery, as were also the turn-over collars that stood out round their necks like a frill.

It is difficult for a stranger to distinguish between the Mohammedans and Christians, but whenever I saw a man wearing a bright green belt I marked him for a Moslem, for the Catholic and Orthodox population do not

FOUNTAIN IN TRAVNIK

ever now affect the colour sacred to the Prophet, which under the Turkish dominion was forbidden them. Occasionally a Turk was travelling with his harem, and I was interested in the different way of veiling adapted here to that in Egypt. Custom decrees that a Mohammedan woman of good family in Bosnia should wear a mask as well as a veil; the masks are hideous, though often elaborately worked with gold and silver. It was deplorable that we did not dare to photograph these groups for fear of giving offence to Moslem prejudices!

At Vitez, where there are great sawmills, we saw with regret the giant trees of the virgin forest cut up ready for transport, and passed a whole trainful of timber. Bosnia will lose half her charm if her forests fall a victim to the march of civilisation!

Before reaching the main line at Lasva we traversed a ravine where the train follows the banks of the mountain torrent between wooded cliffs. At this point the moon rose and flooded the whole landscape with silvery light. It was such a summer's night as that on which the fairies dance! We crossed the Bosna river

shining white in the moonlight and saw a dark castle silhouetted against the sky—we passed by little towns and sleeping villages backed by dark forest with moonlit mountain peaks beyond, and came at last to the capital of Bosnia—to Bosna Serai—the modern Sarajevo.

VIII—SARAJEVO

IN the middle of the last century, Sarajevo was the stronghold of feudalism—the focus of fanaticism—where the Mohammedans, Begs, and Janissaries reigned supreme. To-day Austrian Sarajevo (by which I mean the quarter lying between the railway station and the Hotel Europa) is a modern European city, with fine public buildings, good shops, and electric trams. Here and there a picturesque Turkish house has been left, and here and there the minaret of a mosque rises between the European houses, and Oriental-looking figures wearing the fez or turban jostle Europeans on the pavement; but in the battle for supremacy between East and West, the West has won!

Yet side by side with Austrian Sarajevo is Turkish Sarajevo (so wonderfully situated that former travellers have likened it to Damascus)—the unchanged Orient; there are no boundary lines between them, and viewed

from the surrounding hills they are merged into one fair city. As at Mostar, the great fortified barracks catch the eye of every stranger; in Sarajevo they are outside the town near the station, and therefore very noticeable on your arrival.

From the artistic point of view it is regrettable that the approach from the main line station is so disappointing; far otherwise would be the impression you got of the city if you came from the Servian or Turkish frontier by the new Eastern Railway and alighted at Bistrik, a station on a height above the city which commands a view equally beautiful to that from the old castle. But perhaps there are advantages in seeing first what is least attractive, and not expending all your admiration at once; perhaps, too, my love for that which has the charms of antiquity leads me to underrate the present.

Sarajevo, with its fine Government buildings and its beautiful cathedral (in a city where formerly the only Christian church had to be hidden out of sight behind a high wall), its well-lit streets and law-abiding citizens, is in striking contrast to the lawless Oriental city,

SARAJIVO

which as late as the seventies had no communication with Europe but the weekly post-cart of the Austrian Consulate, of which Miss Irby wrote: "Three places in the hay in the springless vehicle may be hired by those who do not object to jolt on continuously for two days and a night or more." [1]

In the cathedral square is the Post Office, and in the same modern building is the National Museum, founded in 1888, an institution of which the Austro-Hungarian Administration may well be proud. Here the traveller who wishes to study Bosnia seriously can spend days or weeks, according to the time at his disposal, and will have every possible assistance from the courteous officials.

Geology and zoology have each their different sections—in the latter almost the whole animal life of the Balkans is represented; there is a fine collection of old weapons, and a specially delightful one of the old embroideries for which Bosnia is famous, and of carved distaffs used by the women in spinning; but nothing is of such general interest as the

[1] *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey in Europe.* By G. A. Muir Mackensie and A. P. Irby.

exhibition of national costumes, which I believe to be unique.

The groups of wax figures are most lifelike, and arranged according to the different parts of Bosnia in which they are worn. As the dress of the Catholic and Orthodox peasants varies even in the same district—and no two districts are quite alike—it is a great help towards recognising the distinctions to be able to study them here at leisure. Moreover, some of the national costumes shown are now rarely seen—as, for instance, that of the Bosnian gipsies, who, by the way, have their own quarter of the town in Sarajevo. The dress, or rather the head-dress, of the Orthodox bride from Osatica, particularly attracted my attention : the little cap, edged with a fringe of coins that rest upon the hair (commonly worn by both Catholic and Orthodox women under their veils), is adorned not only with flowers and peacock feathers (such a mixture might not inconceivably appear upon a creation in a Bond Street window), but this lady bears upon her head also a small hand mirror. It is a new idea for a Parisian milliner, but I should like to understand its significance—for

A BIT OF SARAJEVO WITH THE RATHAUS IN THE DISTANCE

surely there is some—as applied to the bride ! The brides in other districts wear crowns, as do the Norwegian peasants to this day. It is strange that there should be any likeness in marriage customs of countries so far removed from one another as Scandinavia and a Balkan province of Turkey, as Bosnia was but yesterday.

Other sections of the museum (which is free to visitors any day on application to the custodian) deal with Roman and prehistoric remains found in Bosnia and the Herzegovina. Last, but not least, there is a very fine collection of old Turkish and Bosnian coins as well as those of the neighbouring republic of Ragusa. Other interesting institutions in Sarajevo are the tobacco factory in which hundreds of women and girls are employed, the carpet factory, and the schools in which the native art of inlaying wood and metal with gold and silver has been brought to great perfection ; the designs used are often very beautiful, but, like all hand work, it is costly.

The Government buildings are all very fine, but the most attractive is undoubtedly the new Town Hall upon the banks of the Mil-

jacke. It is a prominent object in almost every view of the city, but being in Oriental style is not out of keeping with the adjacent houses of the Carsija and the mosques and minarets which rise in its vicinity. The interior is well worth seeing, the entrance hall in particular being strikingly beautiful—octagon shaped, with double rows of arches above and below. The colouring here is so soft it does not give the impression of newness. In the great hall, on the contrary, it is harsher and more garish, though the room is very fine in its proportions.

The Town Hall has a broad terrace with Moorish arches which frame in a most entrancing view. On the farther bank of the rushing river the quaint broad-eaved houses of the old town climb the lower slopes of the mountain, and a white minaret flanked by some tall poplar trees points heavenwards. A bridge spans the stream just here, across which I watched the country people driving their flocks of sheep and goats to market, and the veiled Turkish women coming from their homes on the farther side to make purchases in the bazaars of the Carsija. I am familiar with the bazaars of

Egypt and of those of the isle of Cyprus, and the Carsija of Sarajevo reminded me more of the Turkish quarter in Nicosia than of anything I had seen elsewhere. In Cairo the goods displayed are more sumptuous, in Assouan more barbarous.

A family likeness there is in the bazaar quarters of all Mohammedan cities ; in all you find the narrow streets without sidewalks where foot-passengers jostle beasts of burden and hawkers cry their wares ; the little open wooden shops with their heterogeneous collection of goods for sale and the owner sitting serenely cross-legged on the ground or working (always in the same Oriental posture) at his trade ; in all you see the same repellent sights, smell the same smells, and yet find the same fascination, the same charm of pulsing life and vivid colour.

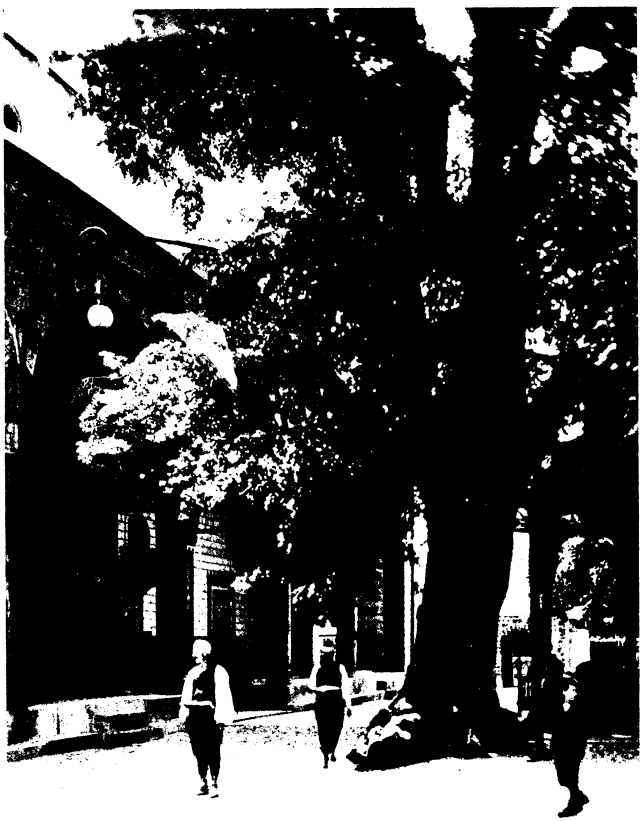
Sarajevo without its bazaars would not be Sarajevo, and every one who knows and loves the old streets of the Bosnian capital will rejoice that the recent fire in the Carsija, which did considerable damage, did not wipe out the most interesting quarter. I was very glad to hear that a large sum of money had been col-

lected to help the poor people to rebuild their houses.

The Carsija is seen to the greatest advantage on a market day, when the variety of costumes is truly amazing; for then side by side with the Turks are seen the Catholic and Orthodox peasants from all the surrounding country-side. The trains coming into Sarajevo on a market day are filled with the picturesque crowd, and the scene in the open market-place baffles description.

The crowning glory of the Carsija is the beautiful Begova Dzamija—the third finest mosque in the realms of Islam, of which the Bosnian Mohammedans may well be proud.

Through a grating in the walls of the courtyard you catch a glimpse of a lovely fountain, shaded by an immense sycamore tree, whose branches overshadow the mosque, where pious Moslems are performing their ablutions before the hour of prayer. When I came upon it first on a hot afternoon, fresh from the turmoil of the Carsija, I stood entranced at the poetry of the scene! The green canopy overhead was grateful to the eye—the sound of running water to the ear—the graceful arches



COURTYARD OF BEGOVA DZAMIJA MOSQUE (SARAJEVO)

and lovely colouring of the mosque in the background—the play of light and shade on the fountain, and the picturesque Oriental figures in the foreground would have delighted an artist; but I found more in it than this! The same feeling came over me that I have experienced in turning from the noisy streets of an Italian town into some church at the hour of benediction, or from the busy streets of London into the cloisters of Westminster—the relief of the spirit that turns from the mart to the temple, from the seen to the unseen! The Moslems on the marble steps in the forecourt of the mosque (that beautiful forecourt that I afterwards studied in detail and found so exquisite) were worshipping towards Mecca—some bending reverently, others prostrate on the ground. If they observed me watching them, they may have thought my curiosity idle and unseemly; I could not tell them that my spirit worshipped with them the spiritual Presence which is at the heart of the universe, and man calls God!

We visited the interior of the mosque on another occasion, accompanied by Olmütz Pasha, a well-known personality in Sarajevo,

and so named from his having fought in the insurrection and been imprisoned at Olmütz. From him we learnt much that was interesting about the endowments and the charities connected with the mosque. The property belonging to it called "Vakuf" brings in a very large income, and one thousand people, according to our informant, are supported from these funds, including priests and poor pensioners. In Turkish times, he said, the funds were often misappropriated, but under the superintendence of the present Government they are well administered. I do not know whether the sentiments expressed by Olmütz Pasha fairly represent those of the Mohammedan population as a body, but he, at least, was well content with the new order of things, and often drew comparisons between the pre-occupation times and the present, to the advantage of the latter, which, coming from a Turk, rather surprised us. The interior of the Begovia Dzamija is very fine, the walls being beautifully painted in Oriental designs of subdued colouring, and adorned with texts from the Koran. The inscription over the doorway states that the mosque was built by

Ghazi Usrej Beg, "The Glory of Justice and Fountain of Benevolence." The founder and his wife rest in a little chapel beside the main building, which is the enduring memorial of their piety.

There is a curious stone column in the courtyard you should not overlook, for it is an interesting relic of the past. The grooved portion measures exactly a Turkish ell, and it was placed here by a pasha of long ago to settle disputes between buyers and sellers as to whether the former had been given good measure.

The mosque was not Usrej Beg's only gift to Sarajevo, for almost opposite is the "Medrasa," founded by him, where Mohammedan boys are educated free of cost. If you peep into the open kitchen adjoining the courtyard at dinner-time you will see steaming bowls of soup and bread being dealt out to them, as well as to some poor pensioners and ragged beggars. From here Olmütz Pasha took us on to see the "Scheriat" college for law students, established by the Government so that Bosnian Mohammedans need not go, as formerly, to Constantinople. This college, though not large, is worth seeing; the new

buildings, which were erected eighteen years ago, are in Moorish style, built round a central courtyard with a fountain in the middle.

The arrangements for the comfort of the students are as much in advance of the Mohammedan university in Cairo as the English universities are of this. In Cairo the students have but one little cupboard each in which to keep their food, their scanty clothing, and their books—they sleep on the floor altogether; here each has a comfortable little room furnished with a divan, which forms a bed at night, a small wardrobe, and a table, and takes his meals in the general dining-hall. Those who know the undergraduates' rooms at Oxford or Cambridge will recall the luxurious chairs and lounges in which the young sybarite delight. The students at Sarajevo read law and study theology, and after a four years' course can enter the Government service as judges in the Mohammedan courts of law. Those I saw were extremely intelligent-looking; many, no doubt, were sons of those Bosnian nobles who survived the insurrections of thirty years ago—the proud Begs who set even the Viziers at defiance.

Nothing in Sarajevo recalls those days more vividly than the old Servian church, hidden behind a high wall and sunk beneath the level of the street, so that not even its roof shall meet the eye; it typifies the condition of the subject race who worshipped there, tolerated only when not persecuted, so long as they made themselves inconspicuous and kept out of the way of the followers of the Prophet.

The little church, which dates from 1530, is a square building with a gallery supported on arches running round, which is set apart for the women of the congregation. The carved and gilded screen and the curious Ambona (pulpit) are its most remarkable features. The screen is divided into panels containing quaint Byzantine paintings, in which the saints wear halos of solid silver (fastened on to the painted wood) and the angels have silver wings. Two large paintings in the upper part of the screen represent the Last Supper and Christ washing the feet of His disciples. A beautiful old silver lamp which will excite the cupidity of every collector hangs before the altar, and there are some very interesting things to be seen in the treasury. The bridal

crown especially attracted my attention, and the "chelenka" given to athletes in token of victory. It is remarkable that the treasury was preserved intact during the revolution and terrible persecutions in the last days of Turkish rule.

There still survives, among the Orthodox population of Sarajevo, a curious Easter custom that arose out of the insecurity of past times, when even Christian women went veiled for safety from outrage. On the greatest festival of the Christian year the country lasses in rural England still put on something new "for luck" and also to enhance their charms in the eyes of country lads, for the budding of the trees and the mating of the birds seem to arouse in human breasts a like impulse to wed.

In the Spring a richer crimson comes upon the robin's breast,
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love,

But the poor Christian maidens of Sarajevo did not dare to show their finery in the streets—they did not dare to leave their homes alone; how should they find lovers—how the young men wives? On one day in the year alone—on Easter Monday—behind the strong walls that

MARKET SCENE IN SARAJIVO

shut off the precincts of their church from the Turkish town, did they show themselves in their best, wearing all the jewels and gold and silver coins that were their dowry. For in those days no Christian could possess any property, that was not portable, and out of this had arisen the Easter gathering that has been called for want of a better name "the marriage market," still held in the quaint courtyard of the little Orthodox church, and worth going to see.

The houses that cluster round the old fortress, within the protection of its surrounding walls, are the oldest in Sarajevo. Here was the beginning of the town which gradually spread from the castle to the valley below and stretched along the river. The "Grad," as this quarter is called, has escaped all the fires which have from time to time destroyed the town beneath, and the old castle is still a strong fort. Behind the so-called "White Bastion" the Austrian soldiers who fell here in the sanguinary battles of 1878 are buried in one common grave.

It was my good fortune to be in Sarajevo during the Mohammedan feast of Bairam,

when the city, viewed from the height on which the castle stands, looked like a scene out of the *Arabian Nights*. Its countless mosques and minarets (reputed to be over one hundred in number, though I have never been able to count so many) are hung with myriad lamps and sketched in light against the dark background of the surrounding mountains. I took the winding way that leads upwards to the castle in the late afternoon and watched the glow of sunset fade into twilight. I heard the muezzins answer one another from mosque to mosque, and watched as one by one the minarets shone out in the gathering darkness —the twenty-four hours' fast, kept so religiously by every Mussulman, was ended, and Turkish Sarajevo, with the setting of the sun, gave itself up to feasting which would last far into the night.

It matters little in what direction you climb the hills round the city ; there are lovely views everywhere, though from the purely artistic point of view it is impossible not to regret the old Turkish town which is so infinitely more picturesque, in a water-colour sketch I have seen of it, than the Sarajevo of to-day.

Mohammedan churchyards are frequent in the precincts of the city, and you soon learn to know the graves of men and women, priests and people one from another. The turbaned graves are those of men ; but the form of the turban decides the rank : those marking the graves of the janissaries and the dervishes are higher than those of the merchant. The stone above a woman's grave is always pointed, and women are laid to rest in a coffin, which is never the case with men among the Mohammedans of Bosnia.

A very interesting churchyard is that of the Spanish Jews on the lower slopes of Mount Trebevic, where huge boulders form the tombstones ; this being, according to Mr. Thomson, who visited Bosnia in 1897, to keep the wolves from digging up and devouring the bodies. It is quite probable, as a resident in Sarajevo told me their howling may still be heard just outside the city in very severe winters, though they are gradually being exterminated.

The Spanish Jews, of whom there are about 3000 in Sarajevo besides colonies in Mostar, Travnik and Banjaluka, took refuge in Bosnia

in the sixteenth century and are a very interesting section of the community, as they carefully preserved the language and customs of their forefathers and hold no intercourse with the Jewish traders who have settled in Bosnia since the Occupation.

The head-dress of the Spanish Jewesses (a high silk cap edged with gold) adds one more to the infinite variety of national costumes to be seen in the streets of Sarajevo ; they have, however, unfortunately discarded their Oriental dresses for those of Europe, or at all events do not wear the former in the streets.

It is to be feared that before long the Serbs will follow this example, but as yet the Bosnian capital shows greater variety of national costumes than any other city of the near East, and lovers of the picturesque should hasten to visit it before they vanish into the limbo of the past and " Sarajevo the Golden " loses one of its chiefest charms.

IX—ILIDZE

IT is a distinct surprise to the traveller, who has the thought of Bosnia as an uncivilised land, to come across such a charming bathing-place as Ilidze.

We made it our head-quarters during our first visit to Bosnia, and it was delightful after a day's sight-seeing in Sarajevo to come back to the quiet of an hotel standing in the midst of an extensive park, and to dine in the garden where the air was full of the scent of flowers and listen to the nightingales. It was delightful to go out here in the early morning, before the dew was off the flowers, and wander through the avenues of acacia trees, laden with snowy perfumed blossoms, beyond the park into the green meadows and see the shepherds with their flocks and the picturesque country people at work in the fields.

Often though I feel inclined to quarrel with the march of civilisation, when it encroaches on antiquity, I appreciate to the full the work

the Austrian Government has done in building suitable hotels (so that travellers can see something of the beautiful scenery of Bosnia without unnecessary discomfort), and in particular the work done at Ilidze by the late Minister Herr von Kalley.

It adds much to the rural attractiveness of this pretty place that instead of one great hotel there are three smaller buildings, each surrounded by trees, each with many balconies, and all connected by covered ways with the restaurant, where in warm weather all meals are served in the open air.

I may say here that should you happen upon hot weather in Bosnia, as we did in the month of May, you need not draw the conclusion that the heat will necessarily increase as summer advances, and therefore hasten your departure. In this year (as I learnt on my return to Bosnia in the autumn) the hot spell we experienced in the early summer was followed by much cooler weather, and no extreme heat occurred again.

The baths of Ilidze were known to the Romans, and a piece of mosaic at the back of the Hotel Bosna remains to tell the tale. It

may be that this discovery of the hot springs' curative powers was the origin of the Roman city that once existed near the source of the Bosna river. Whether any use was made of the healing waters during the Middle Ages is not known, but the Turks had a primitive bathing establishment here up to the time of the Occupation. To-day the bathing establishment is in keeping with twentieth century requirements, and visited by health seekers from near and far.

But besides being an inland watering-place, Ilidze is a pleasure resort for the people of Sarajevo, being easily reached by a little narrow-gauge train in twenty minutes from the capital. On Sunday afternoons especially our quiet was invaded by crowds from the city, when the bands played in the park, and I fear we were sometimes selfish enough to regret it, though it was an interesting and representative crowd that promenaded up and down or drank coffee at the little tables in the gardens. Many officers were there in smart uniforms, accompanied by ladies in light summer frocks of the latest Vienna mode, rubbing shoulders with Bosnian peasants in gala cos-

tume and townspeople who were neither smart nor picturesque, but always neat and orderly ; and one and all seemed imbued with the spirit of light-hearted pleasure-making that is typically Austrian.

From Ilidze we made our way one day to the source of the Bosna, and feasted at the little open-air restaurant on the speckled trout for which the river is famous. The enterprising Government has even extended its care to the freshwater fisheries, and at the source of the Bosna there is an interesting establishment for trout-breeding from which fish are sent to stock the streams and lakes all over the country.

The distance to this pretty spot (where there is coolness to be found on the hottest day on the little green islands in the river beneath the shadow of the mountain) is only about two miles from Ilidze, and a shady avenue goes all the way.

Our most interesting excursion from Ilidze was the ascent of Mount Trebevic, where we slept at the tourist hut on the summit to see the sun rise next morning—but that is anticipating !

OLD SERVIAN CHURCH IN SARAJIVO

Mount Trebevic rises to a height of over 5000 feet to the south of Sarajevo, and the members of the tourist club very frequently make up parties for the ascent and spend a merry evening on the summit. Such a party, of which I was the only lady, we were invited to join by Baron Mollinary, the Prefect of Sarajevo. All those present on this occasion, with one exception, occupied high positions in the Government, and several were heads of departments ; the exception was the only pure Austrian who came from Vienna and spoke German as his native language, the other members of the party being Hungarian, Poles, Italians, who all spoke Serb. This has an interesting bearing on the statement made in some English papers at the time of the Annexation that Bosnia is entirely governed by Austrians of Teutonic race who are ignorant of the native tongue.

We arranged to meet on the summit, for the majority were walking, while we preferred to ride on account of the heat, and arrived there shortly after sunset, having lingered on the way to enjoy the views of Sarajevo from the heights, and then ridden slowly

through the forest that clothes the upper slopes of the mountain and stopped to pick wild flowers.

All the members of our party had arrived before us but Baron Mollinary, and of him there was no sign! The last glow of sunset had faded and darkness had fallen, when a faint shout came from below, and some one recognised the Baron's voice, and suggested that he must have lost his way in the forest, which proved to be the case. Guided by the answering shouts of our party, he at length reached the tourist hut bearing in his hand—an English flag!

Then I learnt that his mishap had been caused by his anxiety to pay me a pretty compliment. He had said jokingly, a few days previous, that when we went by raft down the Drina I must have my flag to sail under, and it seems he had made up his mind to procure one and present it to me on the mountain. In Sarajevo the Union Jack was unobtainable, so the resourceful Baron went to work to sketch it at the club, and found a seamstress to do the sewing. She did not finish the work as promised; the Baron started

THE ENGLISH FLAG ON MOUNT TREBEVIC

late in consequence, and to save time tried to take a short cut with disastrous results, and after wandering for hours had almost made up his mind to spend the night in the forest when his shouts were heard. I was really distressed, when I saw how much he was exhausted, to think that I had been the unwitting cause of so much trouble, and felt not a little guilty when he handed me my country's flag which was toasted at supper by the whole party—a compliment I appreciated the more highly because the many nations of the Austrian Empire were represented, and because the Anti-Austrian tone of the English press over the proposed new Balkan railway shortly before had caused a good deal of sore feeling, so that cordiality towards my country-people was hardly to be expected at the moment.

The tourist hut on Trebevic is kept by a forester and his wife, who made us most comfortable and we would gladly have spent a longer time there; as it was our slumbers were short, for official duties called most of the party back to Sarajevo at an early hour next morning, and it seemed more sociable to

accompany them. I stood on the topmost peak of the mountain at sunrise, looking across to the snowy peak of the Dormitor—the giant of the Montenegrin mountains—and at five we were again in the saddle watching the morning mists float upward from the valley as we descended the mountain.

I regretted that we were not able to make more mountain excursions from Ilidze, and especially that we could not visit the observatory on the Bjelasnica, at 2400 feet above sea-level, which is the highest in the Balkans. The tour, we were told, could be made in one day in summer, but as fourteen to fifteen hours on foot or in the saddle is a harder day's work than most people care for, it is usual to take two days over it, sleeping at a tourist hut on the mountains. From the observatory, where there are two guest rooms for tourists, there is a magnificent view of the highest mountains of Montenegro, Herzegovina, and the Sandjak Novi Bazar. The Black Mountains of the warlike mountaineers—the "bloody Herzegovina" of the past (though now as safe as any part of Europe), and the turbulent province of Turkey, which has just

been vacated by the Austrian troops—truly this is a view to kindle the imagination.

It was always a joy to me in Bosnia to visit the churches on Sunday mornings and see the gatherings of peasants in festal attire. At Stab, near Ilidze, the costumes were delightful; my note-book tells of one or two that particularly attracted my attention, and which we photographed: a girl in a white dress of Turkish crêpe worn under an embroidered zouave jacket, with vest of crimson velvet, wearing on her head an orange-coloured scarf, with a white veil beneath, red stockings with embroidered leggings showed below her short skirt, and silver ornaments, completed her attire. She was accompanied by a friend who wore full black Turkish trousers and a zouave jacket edged with gold braid, and wore curious ancient silver bracelets set with coloured stones. I frequently saw peasants whose sleeveless jackets were embroidered with gold and edged with fur, and men and women alike delight to adorn their caps with flowers on Sundays and festivals.

X—ON THE DRINA RIVER

IT has been truly said that, even in this world, there are always compensations! To nothing does it more fully apply than to getting up with the sun, or soon after it, on a summer's morning. Custom makes it a hardship to leave your comfortable bed at such an early hour, but Dame Nature repays you threefold for the effort by showing herself at her very best.

To be exact, we were called at half-past four, the day we were to enjoy the novel experience of a voyage down the Drina River on a raft. It was quite unnecessary to get up as early (as we afterwards found when we had to wait at the station of Bistrik), but opinions varied as to the time it would take us to reach it, the hill being very steep, and we wished to be on the safe side.

The day's business begins early in the Orient, and the little coffee-houses we passed

on our way to the station were all open and had many customers.

The backward views over the city are charming as you climb the hills to Bistrik, and not less so those from the train between here and the point where the new Eastern Railway to the Turkish and Servian frontiers joins the main line at the principal station. From Bistrik to Visigrad there is hardly a mile of the way that is not extremely interesting. The line is a triumph of engineering, piercing the heart of mountains and crossing terrific gorges by many viaducts ; it seems as if the engineers had specially planned it to show the glorious scenery, so often do you come out of the darkness of a tunnel at just the right spot for getting a perfect view. One of the most delightful places on the line is Pale, with its mountain pastures where cattle graze and its pretty country houses of Sarajevo residents.

I am told that this narrow-gauge Bosnian railway was one of the costliest in Europe to build, and I can well believe it. The highest point of the line is reached an hour or so after leaving Sarajevo at Stambulcic on the Javorina,

which is 3000 feet over sea-level, and forms the watershed between the Bosna and Drina rivers. We left the train at Ustipraca, having seen more in the few hours' journey from Sarajevo than it was possible to remember, of rushing rivers flowing through narrow gorges, of dark pine forests varied by beech and oak, of inaccessible mountain peaks and dizzy precipices—all from our seats in the comfortable train.

From Ustipraca we went to Gorazda, where the raft awaited us, and the civil head of the district and some officers from the garrison were to join the party, and here we lunched at the little open-air restaurant under the trees before the inn. Like Foca, the market town of Gorazda has declined from a place of considerable importance in the Middle Ages to little more than an overgrown village.

The modern iron bridge that now spans the Drina had many forerunners, first of wood and then of stone, which must have been much more picturesque; but doubtless the present bridge is better able to resist the overwhelming force of the water at flood time, which old records show actually broke the

arches of the massive stone bridge erected in 1568 by Mustapha Pasha. In those days all the caravans from the East crossed the Drina Bridge, and a great caravansary adjoined it, for the trade between Turkey and the Adriatic was considerable, when the little republic of Ragusa was at the height of its glory, and had vessels sailing to all lands.

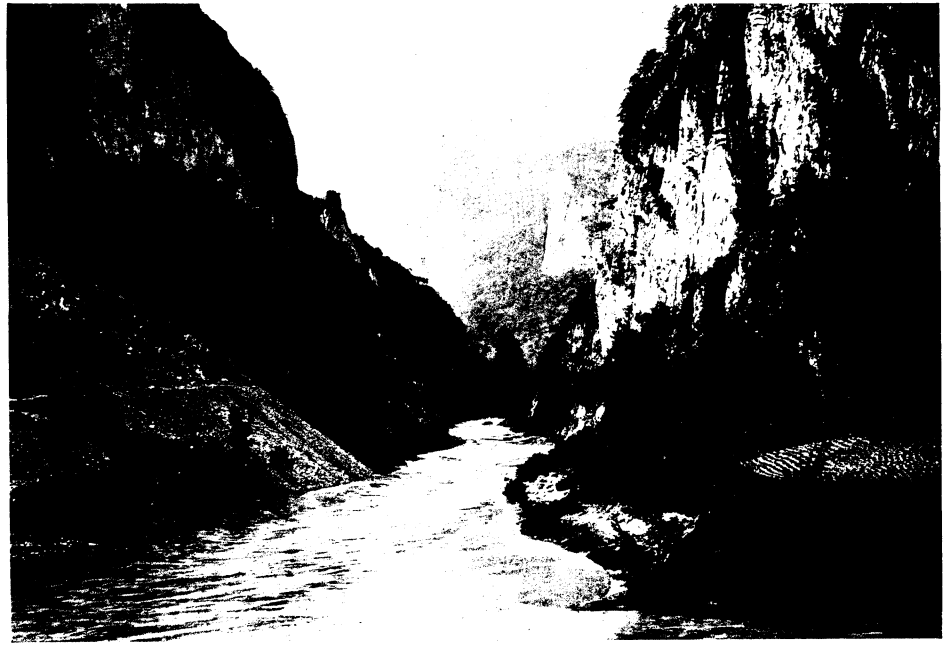
Our raft was awaiting us below the bridge, and a crowd had collected to see us off, for there is little happening in Gorazda, and small events are of importance; besides, it is not often that anyone besides the steersmen undertakes the voyage. We found our novel craft gaily decorated in our honour with flags and green boughs of trees arranged to form a little canopy in the centre for shelter from the sun, under which rude seats had been made by fixing two logs of wood on end with a cross piece to sit on, so high that our feet were a foot or more off the ground. We saw the necessity of this later on when the water washed over the raft in going through the rapids.

My Union Jack was run up and floated gaily aloft, surrounded by the black and gold

of Austria, the red and yellow of Bosnia, and the red, white, and green stripes of Hungary.

The raft was formed of mighty trunks of forest trees, about sixty feet in length, fastened together for transport, by the medium of the river to the Danube, and ultimately to the Black Sea. It was manned by two picturesque Bosnians, whose skill in guiding it was really remarkable. Often we seemed on the point of colliding with some projecting rock, but at the critical moment a deft movement of the oars turned the raft in the nick of time. Accidents, however, are not infrequent ; we were told of two raftsmen who had been unableto clear the arches of the bridge at Visigrad, and met their death there shortly before.

Less than half an hour after leaving Gorazda we came to a particularly dangerous spot, where a great rock partly blocked the stream and a terrific torrent rushed through the narrow channel ; it was a moment of tense excitement as the raft was swept along by the headlong force of the water. Had the steersmen lost their presence of mind for a moment it would have been all over with us. Even where the river was at its normal width (about



MOUTH OF THE RIVER LIM

two hundred feet between Gorazda and Visigrad) the current was so strong that it was impossible to stop the raft at Ustipraca, though a gentleman from the Sarajevo museum, who had been unable to catch the early train and wired he would join us *en route*, was waiting to board it. The poor man had his four hours' journey both ways for nothing.

Along almost the whole upper course of the Drina the banks rise steeply on either side, covered with thick woods, with here and there little grassy glades where the herdsmen bring their sheep and goats for pasturage. In places the cliffs rise sheer from the water to a height of four or five hundred feet. The finest scenery we passed was near Medjedje (which, by the way, is the junction for the little branch line to Vardiste) ; just before coming there we passed cliffs fully a thousand feet in height, and a little farther on the rocks assumed most wonderful forms. Perhaps the most interesting point on the river is that where the Lim joins the Drina, which is spanned at this point by an iron bridge with a fortified watch-house beside it. (Every station on the line between Sarajevo and the Servian frontier is built with

a view to defence in time of war, having the windows fitted with steel shutters pierced with loopholes, steel doors behind the wooden ones and loopholes in the walls.)

Our voyage on the Drina was all too short. As we neared Visigrad in the evening we regretted arrangements had not been made for us to go on to Ljubovija on the Servian frontier, which takes two or three days by river. There are, I believe, some very dangerous places beyond Visigrad, especially at the point where a tributary river, the Zepa, joins the main stream, and the passage is blocked by gigantic rocks; but we were told passengers can leave the raft and join it beyond the rapids, and the night can be spent at a "Finanzwach Kaserne" (fortified border custom houses). The scenery beyond Visigrad is said to be much wilder, and in the thick forests that clothe the mountain sides bears are still frequently met with.

Visigrad lies on both sides of the Rzava, a mountain stream which flows into the Drina below the town, and has some very picturesque features. Old Turkish watch-towers crown all the surrounding heights, for under the Otto-

man Empire the town was a place of considerable importance, lying not only on the great highway from the East to the coast, but also on the road between the seat of Imperial government and the provincial capital. It was, too, the first place of any importance in Bosnia to be reached by travellers coming from Stamboul, and here, as at Gorazda, was a great caravansary for their reception (which the ruins showed was built to suit the tastes of people of rank, being no common "han," but fitted with such luxuries as baths). It stood near the beautiful old bridge, which still remains to excite the admiration of modern travellers.

An inscription in Turkish upon one of the central stones states that the bridge was built in the year 979 of the Hedschra (Turkish reckoning), or A.D. 1577, by the Vizier Mehmed Pascha Sokolovic, a Bosnian noble who became one of the foremost statesmen of the Ottoman Empire. It spans the Drina by eleven graceful arches, and was erected in accordance with the designs of an architect from Ragusa, the skill of whose builders was second only to that of Venice, and was doubt-

less famed far and wide as a masterpiece of construction, for a Serb proverb runs: "As firm as the bridge at Visigrad." In the quaintly worded inscription, giving the date and the name of the builder, Mehmed Pasha's wisdom and charity is praised, and it is stated that his bridge was unequalled at that day; it is unsurpassed still in Bosnia in point of beauty, being only equalled perhaps by that of Mostar.

There are many legends about the building of this bridge, of which one relates that the builder had ridden into the stream to ascertain the depth of the water when suddenly his horse stood still, and neither whip nor spur availed to move it. Looking down he espied the river fairy with her golden hair wound round the horse's forefeet to stop its speed, and drew his sword to free his steed by cutting off her head. The fairy begged that her life might be spared, and promised in return to help with the building of the bridge, but failed to keep her promise, and for seven years the building done in the day was undone in the night.

At last the Pasha grew impatient and told

the builder to again summon the fairy to his aid. She came and declared her inability to help (the river spirits being against the building of the bridge), but made the gruesome suggestion that they might be propitiated if two living maidens were walled up in the pillars. According to the story this was done, and from that time on the building proceeded without interruption. Another version has it that a woman was to be the sacrifice, and the workmen determined on seizing the first who approached; this happened to be the young wife of the builder, who, in spite of her prayers for mercy, was buried alive in the foundations of the bridge that is an enduring monument of her husband's art.

Such sacrifices are frequently mentioned in Bosnian folklore, and it is related that as late as the middle of the last century, when a bridge was being built at Trebinje, the people begged the dead body of a child to bury in the foundations. If this be true, it is a curious instance of how superstition lingers among a primitive people!

The last of the stories about the bridge at Visigrad relates that after its completion the

Pasha feared it would be unable to withstand the force of the trees carried down by the water in flood and, at the builder's suggestion, made a present of money to the spirits of the river! A pile of gold was deposited in the centre of the bridge and shovelled into the flood beneath, while at the same time the builder had himself let down by a rope and struck viciously at a great pine tree that lay across the arches and blocked the passage. The legend ends by saying that the tree bled as the axe struck it, and a voice proceeded from it declaring that Mahmed's bridge would last till the end of time. So the Drina spirits were conquered and the bridge remains!

Some crumbling walls, which are all that remain of the once strong castle of Starigrad, crown a height above the Drina just outside Visigrad; an old tower below, which doubtless once formed part of the fortifications, is connected with the story of the Servian hero Kraljevic Marko who figures so largely in the national songs and folklore. Tradition says he was a prisoner here for nine years, and at his escape cleared the Drina at one bound—a feat which, if he performed it, would place

him in the foremost rank of the world's athletes of all time.

There is another old castle rather more than an hour's drive from Visigrad on the way to Priboj, which I should have liked to have visited, as so many legends cling around it,—this is Dobrunj, which gave its name to a place of some importance in the Middle Ages; but we were due to leave Visigrad early the following morning, so had to content ourselves with seeing the town, of which the gipsy quarter is the most picturesque part. Very reluctantly we bade good-bye next day to the Drina river.

XI—FROM GORAZDA TO FOCA

IF we had not been very persevering we should never have seen historic Foca, or the charming country that lies around it; for though we were on the Drina in the early summer, time failed us to explore the border; and when we came again to Bosnia in the stirring time that followed the annexation, Foca was literally besieged by the military, who occupied every room in the hotel and every private room in the town. We were warned of this in advance, but as accounts varied, trusting to our usual good fortune to find a roof to cover our heads, we set off from Gorazda one golden October day for the four hours' drive along the banks of the Drina.

It was not alone of the lack of accommodation we were warned, but also of the possible dangers of the road in such unsettled times, and the risk of being shut up at Foca should war break out! But we had just returned from the Sandjak, where we had also gone (in

FOCA FROM THE HILLS

spite of warnings) and not regretted it, and we had already given up a long-planned tour across the mountains from Cajnica to Foca, because even optimistic people urged us not to take a path so near the frontier! Not to see Foca at all would have been too cruelly disappointing—so we went! Nor did we go alone, for the wife of the General commanding the forces in the Sandjak, Baroness von Rhemen, and her sister, asked to be allowed to join us while they were waiting at Gorazda for the troops. The Baroness was careful not to let her husband know of her intentions, lest her enterprise should be nipped in the bud by a telephone message from Plevlje. We learned afterwards, however, that our movements had been reported to him daily while she was in our company.

It was the last day of the great Moslem festival of Bairam, and at the little coffee-houses by the roadside, on the outskirts of Gorazda, the Turks were gathered in festal array. Our driver, too, seemed to have been celebrating, and his mood as he sang Turkish songs, and sometimes turned sharp corners at break-neck speed, at others flicked his whip

over the horses' back quite suddenly (startling us as much as the poor animals), was too convivial to be reassuring. But after a while we got used to these little incidents, and took them as part of the programme. It dawned on us, moreover, that our driver was very proud of us. Were we not "Ingleski" who had come from afar to see his country and make pictures of it? He asked to handle the camera, and beamed when we took his photo in the foreground of a picturesque group of Turks, who attracted our attention at a house by the roadside. I am sure he related to one and all what distinguished strangers he had the honour of driving.

Like all Bosnian post roads made by the military, that from Gorazda to Foca leaves nothing to be desired, and the scenery is delightful. The country folk here are very prosperous, thanks to their orchards and tobacco fields, so the red-tiled roofs of better-class houses often replace the peaked wooden ones, but are not less picturesque, especially when the whitewashed walls are hung with garlands of tobacco leaves to be dried in the sun, as is frequently the case. The tobacco

grown in this part, by the way, is said to be the best in Bosnia.

The produce of the orchards—purple plums and fine walnuts—were on sale at every little shop in Gorazda and Foca.

All the way we followed the course of the Drina—its transparent green waters on our left flowing between wooded banks of golden autumn foliage, sometimes rushing over stones, sometimes seeming to sleep in the sun. It is but a little river after the drought of summer, a very different Drina to the torrent along which clever steersmen directed our raft a few months ago, when the stream was swollen with the melting snows from the mountains—a very different Drina to that which uprooted trees and swept away whole houses along its banks in the terrible floods of 1898.

We came to the halfway house, where our Turk, rather to our anxiety, stopped for refreshment, but from another traveller who was returning from Foca and went into the coffee-house we learned he was taking nothing stronger than coffee. *We* preferred to remain outside, for the glimpse we had of rooms hung round with ghastly-looking sheepskins that

had not long ago left their first owners' backs was not inviting; the skins likewise adorned the outer walls.

Beyond this point the valley narrowed, and the river, now shut in by high hills sloping steeply to its brink, formed rapids.

About an hour before coming to Foca there is an idyllic little village named Ustikolina, grouped about the minaret of a very ancient mosque. Long ago, before the Turkish conquest, history relates that it was a place of importance, famous for the skill of its goldsmiths and with a considerable trade; on a hill close by the foundations of a mediæval castle may still be traced. But that the history of Ustikolina goes back far beyond the Middle Ages is shown by the number of prehistoric gravestones that have been found in the neighbourhood.

In the fifteenth century the conquering armies of the Sultan Mehmed Fatih came this way, and on the banks of the Josanica (a tributary of the Drina), not far from here, was fought, in 1463, the bloody battle between the Turks and Bosnians, in which the great Bosnian hero, Ivko of Josanica, perished. The

MOHAMMEDAN GRAVEYARD IN FOCA

country people say that he was buried where he fell, and still point to an ancient gravestone as "the stone of Ivko," while the Turks hold sacred the grave of the Moslem leader who slew him and afterwards fell in the same fight, and drink the rain-water which collects in a hollow of the gravestone, believing it a cure for all manner of ills.

The mosque of Ustikolina, which is one of the oldest in the land, was built by the first Turkish governor, Turkani Emin (whose grave may still be seen in the Turkish graveyard at Presjeka). It is conspicuous from all the rest because the "Mischan" (Turkish gravestone) is of marble, on which is carved the Crescent and the Star. There is an inscription upon it in Turkish, which can only be partly read as the marble is broken, but one of the oldest inhabitants relates that in his youth it was intact and gave the year of Turkani Emin's death, 869, after the Turkish reckoning; so that the age of the mosque can be determined accordingly.

Like its more important neighbour, Foca, Ustikolina has declined from a busy town to a sleepy village. To-day the inhabitants

specially pride themselves on growing the best tobacco in the district.

The afternoon was drawing to a close when we came in sight of Foca, a white town with many minarets, built where two rivers meet, and backed by forest-clad mountains—there is no fairer sight, nor fairer town, seen from afar, in Bosnia. We had to cross the river twice, once by a new bridge from which there is a glorious view of river and mountains, and then again by an old wooden one which dates from Turkish times. So we came to the Hotel Gerstl, where we were told every room was filled to overflowing; but we succeeded in persuading our host to put us up beds in the bathroom, while an officer from the garrison in the Sandjak, whom we fortunately met, gave up his own apartment to the Baroness and her sister, who were only remaining till the morrow.

Foca's pride and glory is the famous "Aladza" (coloured) mosque, so called on account of the paintings of the interior. This mosque has been recently restored for the Mohammedans by the Austrian Government at a cost of kr. 10,000 (about £400), a plain

proof that the Moslems will not suffer through the annexation. It will be very beautiful when time has softened the tints a little ; at present, the restorations being but a month old, the effect is rather garish. Another mark of Austrian friendship is the costly carpet, so immense that it covers the whole floor, which was presented by the late Crown Prince Rudolf.

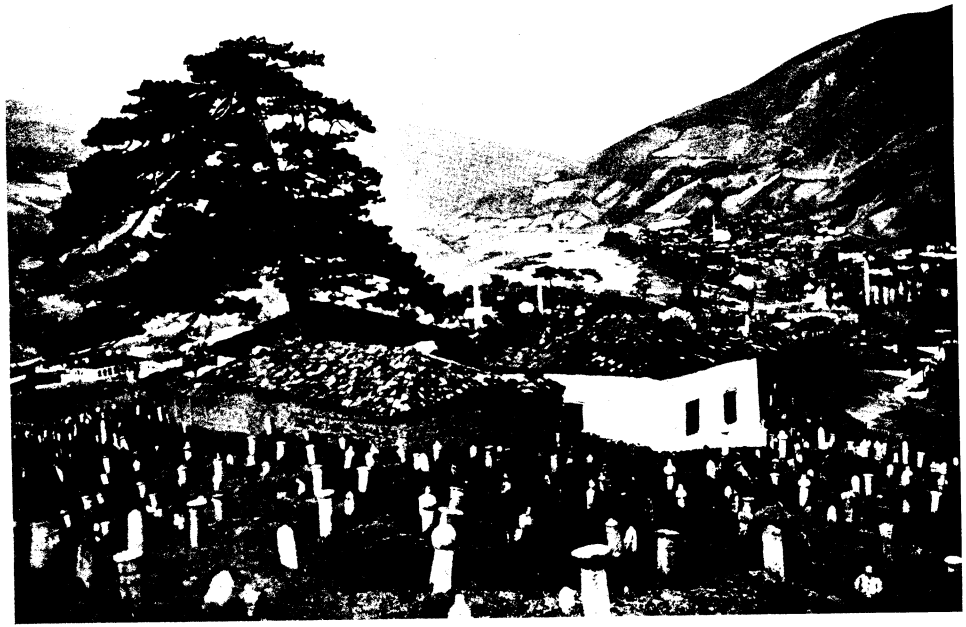
The mosque dates from the year 1549, and a pretty story is told of the founder, Hassan Nasir, which runs thus. Hassan was a Bosnian by birth, a son of poor parents who lived near Foca. He quarrelled with them in his youth, ran away from home, and finally took service with the Sultan, who showed him great favour, so that he rose in time to hold high offices of State, and was one of the Sultan's most trusted servants, accompanying his master wherever he went.

Many years passed, and Hassan Nasir had grown rich in the Sultan's service, and he began to wonder if his parents still lived, and wished to see them once again. So he begged leave of absence from the court, obtained a Firman to build a mosque in his native town, and set out on his journey to his birthplace,

having on his person three belts full of gold for the building of the mosque.

On the road he was waylaid by robbers, who took away his treasure and put him in chains; but he escaped miraculously, for the robbers, having drunk deeply at the "Han," where they spent the night, fell fast asleep, and as they slept Hassan prayed for help, and in answer to his prayer the chains fell from his hands and feet. He seized his treasure, mounted a horse, and arrived safely at Foca, where he saw his mother at the spot where the mosque stands to-day. Years had changed Hassan so much that she did not recognise him, but seeing a stranger from afar, the old woman began to speak of her lost son, in the hope of getting tidings of him. Hassan asked her if there was any mark by which she could recognise her son, and she replied that she would know him anywhere by a mole on his arm; whereupon the traveller drew up his sleeve and showed the mole, and the mother knew her son and embraced him—but died of joy!

On the spot where he was reunited to his mother, Hassan built the mosque to her



DERVISH MONASTERY NEAR FOCA

memory, sending for a skilled architect from Asia Minor, and sparing no expense to make it of exceeding beauty within and without.

Such is the legend of the famous Aladza mosque. It stands within the town, and from the churchyard surrounding it there is an enchanting view of the quaint old town beyond the river, with its broad-eaved houses grouped in picturesque confusion around the minaret of yet another mosque, while behind them rise the mountains. You cross the stream by an ancient wooden bridge, and find yourself in the Carsija, but it is strangely silent and empty ; one half, indeed, of the little Turkish shops are shut—instead of a curious medley of wares for sale you see but wooden shutters —for Foca has no more its former trade, though, to be sure, a new industry has sprung up in fruit-growing for export ; but this does not affect the Carsija.

If you continue through the quiet streets and climb the hill you come upon a Dervish monastery. A low white building built around a little courtyard, out of which rises a spreading pine-tree—a sketch ready made to be transferred to an artist's easel—the dusky stone

pine on the brow of the hill standing out against the blue haze of the mountains across the intervening valley, while all around it are the turbaned graves of bygone generations of Moslems, who little dreamt that a Christian monarch would one day rule this land.

One cannot wonder that the Turks, born and bred in the belief that the supreme head of the State must necessarily be the supreme head of their Church, were sorely puzzled at first by the annexation, and feared that it meant for them compulsory conversion to Christianity ; but great pains have been taken to make it clear that the change of government in no way will affect their religion, and having once grasped this they appear content, or at all events patiently accept the inevitable.

But I am wandering away from Foca ! We lingered there some days, waiting for favourable weather to visit the Sutjeska Valley, in spite of discomforts arising from the strengthening of the garrison and the consequent overcrowding of the hotel (which, though externally promising, can offer little at the best of times). Travellers less inured to roughing it might prefer to visit Foca in one day and

STREET SCENE IN FOCA

return to Gorazda to sleep, where the inn, though smaller, is more comfortable; but if excursions are to be made to Rataj or the Sutjeska Valley it is necessary to sleep, one night at least, at Foca.

We were promoted from the bathroom to a more commodious apartment, through strong influence brought to bear upon our host of the Hotel Gerstl from without, but truth compels me to say that creature comforts were altogether lacking here.[1]

Foca has been Bosnia only since 1880; it formerly belonged to Herzegovina, and played a great part in the insurrection of 1881 and 1882. Its proximity to the Sandjak and to Montenegro account for this, and would make it the chief pawn in the game played on this part of the frontier if trouble came sooner or later. Hence the great barracks at each entrance to the town—hence the military activity here during the recent crisis. Moreover, Foca is on the Drina river, and from the Servian point of view the Drina is the natural boundary between Servia and Bosnia; if it ever came to be so in fact, part of Foca would be Servian.

[1] This was written in November, 1908.

XII—A BOSNIAN FEUDAL CASTLE—RATAJ

OUR first excursion from Foca was to the Turkish castle of Rataj, a good example of the feudal strongholds of the Bosnian Begs, who exercised as despotic a sway here, under the Turkish rule, as any robber knights of the Middle Ages did in Europe. Curiously enough, I have not found mention of Rataj in any guide book, and we had to thank the Bezirks-vorsteher (civil head of the district) for our knowledge of it. He told us that the present Beg, though shorn of power beyond the walls of the little village surrounding his tower, still rules absolutely within them, and the subject of this petty king lived a life wholly cut off from the outside world, never even intermarrying with the people of the villages. This is the more interesting, as the feudal system in Bosnia did not even survive up to the time of the Austrian occupation, but was

THE FEUDAL CASTLE OF RATAJ

put an end to in 1850 by Omer Pasha, who abolished the rank and office of the feudal chiefs and deprived them of their right of taking tithes from their subjects, which from that time on was paid to the Government.

A very interesting account of the Bosnian Begs is given by Miss Irby, the Englishwoman who devoted her life to philanthropic work in Bosnia and lived in Sarajevo before the Austrian occupation.[1] She says, in her book on the Southern Slavs :—

"After the conquest of Bosnia by the Turks, those of the nobility who remained alive in the land became Mohammedan. The Bosnian Begs were the offspring of an alliance between feudalism and Islam.

"The feudal system which had been established in Bosnia in the Christian period was continued after the Mussulman conquest ; with this sole difference, that the feudal lords changed their faith and their souzerain. Their own position was confirmed by this change. We have seen that Bosnia was continually the object of an attack from Hungary. Now the

[1] This lady still resides in Sarajevo during the greater part of the year and superintends the school for Servian girls.

Turkish policy was acute and masterly ; there was also much that was noble and magnanimous in the Osmanli character ; tempting terms were offered to the Bosnian nobles. Perceiving that under the shadow of their mighty conquerors they would be able to preserve their nationality, maintain their feudal privileges, and bid defiance to Hungary and the Pope, many of the nobles threw in their cause with that of the Empire of the Othman and the Bosnian Slavonic Mussulman ; in the words of the Turkish writers, 'the lion that guarded Stamboul,' Bosnia was the bulwark of Islam against Western Europe."[1]

When the Turkish Empire was at the height of its power, the Bosnian Begs often led its conquering armies and were powerful in the ranks of the Janissaries, who practically ruled in Sarajevo, and set the Viziers at defiance. Most of these feudal chiefs resided on their estates, which were cultivated by vassals over whom they exercised power of life and death ; yet some historians maintain that the Christian rayah was less oppressed by the Begs than by

[1] *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey in Europe*, by G. Muir Mackensie and A. P. Irby.

the Turkish tax-gatherers who succeeded them. These Bosnian nobles clung, in secret, to some of the traditions of their Christian forefathers, though making in public so great a show of Mohammedanism, for the German historian Ranke relates that a Bosnian Beg sometimes took a Christian priest secretly to the grave of his forefathers to bless the remains and to pray for their souls, and Miss Irby says some of them kept the name of the patron saint of their family and carefully preserved the patents of nobility of the Christian ancestors; though others were fanatic Moslems and persecuted the Christians whenever opportunity offered. Having heard much of these feudal chiefs, who played so large a part in the little the outside world knows of Turkish rule in Bosnia, I was delighted to have the opportunity of seeing one of their strongholds and possibly its present lord, even though he be but a lion with drawn teeth.

We started with the intention of visiting the little town of Jelec as well as the castle of Rataj, for both lay in the same direction; but the days being short in late October we found this programme could not be carried out, and

had to give up seeing the former place. Jelec is surrounded by a mountainous region that affords pasturage to thousands of sheep and goats, and was from the earliest times famous for its tanneries. As the primitive methods in vogue under Turkish rule could not compete with modern requirements, and the trade from which the inhabitants mostly lived was threatened with extinction, the Austrian Government (which has everywhere fostered the national industries) built a model tannery and leather factory there some fifteen years ago, which has more than restored the reputation of the town. There is another industry arising out of it in which numbers of children are employed—the collecting of sumach, which grows wild on the mountains here, the leaves of which are used in tanning the skins to a fine colour.

For the benefit of anyone who may come this way in the long warm days of summer, I may say here that a bridle-path leads from Jelec over the Zelengora, where pastoral life may be seen at its best in the high Alpine meadows, and extending south to the Montenegran border. This mountain region is not

the less interesting because its wild ravines and dark forests were robbers' lairs less than a generation ago, though safe as any part of Bosnia to-day.

On the way to Rataj we met hundreds of peasants coming to the weekly market in Foca, which is of such importance that the people come from Montenegro and the Sandjak Novi Bazar to attend it; on this occasion, however, the Montenegrins were missing, for during the political crisis and general excitement the Government had considered it wiser not to allow them to cross the border.

As our road ascended in serpentine windings, we saw the approaching groups of peasants from afar, and were perpetually stopping the carriage to snapshot some particularly picturesque people. Most were on foot, but not a few of the more richly dressed on horseback; these bore themselves proudly, like knights of the olden times. Many peasants drove their flocks of sheep and goats, and others had pack-horses laden with goods for sale. Nowhere in Bosnia have I seen greater variety of costume, for some men wore the

fez, others the turban, and still others the white cap of Albania, while not a few had the round pork-pie cap edged with black that is universal in Montenegro (only the embroidered monogram failed, which showed they were not subjects of the Prince of the Black Mountains); all were evidently in festal attire. We reached the highest point of the road about an hour and a half after leaving Foca, and descended the other side of the mountain, through a charming wooded glen, then came out again into a more open landscape where green meadows were framed by distant forest-clad mountains glowing with autumn foliage.

At a wayside hamlet called Budanj we stopped to inquire the way to Rataj from some gendarmes who were resting there, for our driver could speak only Slav, and we were a little dubious as to whether he knew the road himself. They told us we must alight at a certain point and proceed from there on foot. Before coming to it we saw the ancient tower, looking in the distance not unlike a Tyrolese castle, but to reach it was not so easy, for the river lay between! A

Turk we had taken to guide us and carry the cameras, at the point where we left the carriage, made us understand by signs he would carry us across the stream pick-a-back ; but for reasons of cleanliness I had scruples about coming into such close contact, and decided to take off my shoes and stockings and wade ! I must confess, however, I had not bargained for the icy coldness of the water, which was nearly knee-deep in places, nor yet for the difficulty of walking over the slippery stones of the river-bed against a strong current, and had not our guide come to the rescue and held my arm, I think I should have fallen. On the return journey I resigned myself to the inevitable, and consented to be carried !

The castle of Rataj, which is built on a terrace on the mountain-side, stands like a sentinel keeping watch and ward over the Arcadian valley below. On the day of our visit, the whole landscape lay basking in sunshine, as warm as that of midsummer, though it was the last day of October. Blue smoke curled slowly upwards from the roofs of the cottages nestling under the shadow of the

ancient fortress, and fleecy white clouds flecked an azure sky. Everything spoke of peace but that grim tower with its memories of past warfare and oppression.

In seeking the best place to take a picture of it from the distance, we came across a curious rock-hewn tomb, in what appeared from the other side merely a huge boulder that had become detached from the mountain-side. An arched cavity had been scooped out in the interior, in which a coffin-shaped grave was hewn out in the rock; above this was one of the boards used in the mosques for carrying bodies to the grave. There was some rough carving on the arched entrance, and other fragments of carved stone lay scattered around, which suggested that this was the tomb of no common person. But, alas! we could not speak the language to inquire of our guide about this interesting find, and no one in Foca whom I asked on my return there could tell me anything of it.

The village surrounding the castle of Rataj is still fenced in by its mediaeval walls, and we were made to understand we must not enter without the Beg's permission. He was sent

THE BEG OF RATAJ

for and appeared—a fine old man with long, grey beard, who looked not unworthy of his ancestors; we feared at first from his gestures that he refused us entrance to his domain, but our guide motioned us to wait. The Beg left us for a short time, and then returned and signed to us to follow; we afterwards thought he used the interval to order all the women of the village to disappear.

Following our host, we entered his feudal walls, and very rude they were on near approach. First we descended to an underground stable for horses and cattle; above this, on the ground floor, corn was stored; the other floors, six in all, were apparently unused. It was evident the Beg no longer lived in the castle of his ancestors, but in the more comfortable dwelling beside it. We climbed by a circular stone staircase to the topmost story of the ancient pile, which had projections on all four sides for hurling missiles on the besiegers below. When our host playfully took hold of my husband's arm to show him how men were hurled down formerly, it flashed across my mind how utterly we were in his

power had he thought well to rob and murder us. The gloomy walls were depressing, and I was glad to leave them and get out again into the sunshine—it seemed as if memories of dark deeds clung to them. The Beg became very cordial before we bade him adieu ; though we could only communicate to him by signs and smiles, we felt that we had made a favourable impression, and he was delighted when we took his photograph and promised to send him one.

One thing that surprised me in his tiny capital was that I saw no harem windows covered with musharabeah. Did the Turkish women of Rataj have more liberty than elsewhere, I wondered, because there is no one to see them but their blood relations?

What a strange survival in the Europe of the twentieth century is the patriarchal mediæval life of this Turkish village in the heart of the Bosnian mountains !

Only a mile or so distant modern civilisation is represented by a neat European house in a garden where the Austrian revenue officers live, whose duty is to collect taxes in the district. Here we had left our carriage, and

begged for some hot water to make tea on our return before setting off on our long drive back to Foca. What was our surprise to find that they had misunderstood us and provided a substantial meal of soup and meat, which we were expected to partake of at four o'clock in the afternoon, after having had a good lunch in the middle of the day!

Such hospitality, though kind, was embarrassing; politeness forced us to make a feint of eating, but it was hard work, and, fortunately, two pet cats and a dog came to our assistance. There was, however, no feigning about our appreciation of the good Bosnian wine our kind hosts pressed upon us. I only regretted that, though living so near, they could tell me nothing of the castle of Rataj and its past history.

XIII—FROM FOCA TO THE VALLEY OF THE SUTJESKA

THE Sutjeska river runs through one of the grandest ravines in Europe ; but not alone for the wild beauty of the scenery is this valley famous, but also for the dark deeds wrought there by the robber bands who inhabited its mountain fastnesses under Turkish rule and in the early years of the Austrian occupation. It is no exaggeration to say that the banks of the Sutjeska were literally drenched in blood in the past centuries. As late as the eighties two famous robber chiefs, whose names still sound ominously in the peasants' ears, Stojan Kovacevic and Risto Bakac, had their hiding-places in the side valleys that open into the ravine through which the river flows ; thence they issued with their followers to rob and murder travellers, of whom many passed this way (for, though the old Turkish road is but a bridle-path, it was the route by which all commerce

THE SUTJISKA RAVINE

passed from Servia and the Sandjak to Herzegovina and the coast).

The bandit chiefs took refuge across the border in Montenegro when driven from the Sutjeska valley by the Austrian troops, and Stojan Kovacevic is still living there, as Montenegro makes no extradition treaties.

Of Risto Bakac a good story is told that recalls the courtesy of Robin Hood. He fell upon the gendarmerie post of Cureva with a large band; the few gendarmes were powerless to offer resistance to overwhelming numbers, and doubtless expected death. But massacre was, in this particular instance, not Risto's intention; he merely wished to get rid of the gendarmes, whose presence, in the domain he considered his own, was inconvenient. So he dispatched them to Foca, afterwards burning the station to make sure they did not return. Needless to say, retribution fell later, and the Austrian Government deserves full credit for the work of the "Streifkorps" (Border Volunteer Corps), which were specially formed to root out the robbers and make life and property safe on the frontier. These did their duty so effectually that an era of peace and

security dawned for the peasantry, who once went in fear of their lives.

The "Streifkorps" were disbanded many years ago, but reorganised in October, 1908, at the time of our second visit to Bosnia, on account of the demonstrations in Servia and Montenegro that followed the annexation, and the reported formation of marauding bands in these countries, whose intention was to cross into Bosnia. The men serving in the "Streifkorps" are all volunteers from the regular troops, and it is interesting to note that so many Turks volunteered for the service—thirty were serving in one company. The service appeals to soldiers, who love adventure better than regular routine. The risks are great, the life arduous, but the pay good, the common soldiers earning more than double the ordinary pay. The men sleep in the open, and never know from one day to another where they may be; naturally the secrecy as to their movements is one of the secrets of their efficiency. This alone is certain, that no single spot on the frontier escapes their vigilance.

To visit the valley of the Sutjeska the

night must be spent at the gendarme station at Suha, which is so close to the Montenegrin frontier that, in the rather unsettled state of affairs at the time of our visit to Foca, we hesitated a little about making the excursion, greatly though we desired to see this wonderful ravine. We put it off, therefore, from day to day, to see if the political horizon cleared, and by the time the excitement had died down and we could go the weather had suddenly turned very cold. It required almost more courage to face the early start in the state of the elements, with a whole day's ride in prospect, and only a possibility of the sun dispelling the fog later, than the possibility of being stopped by Montenegrin bands. We decided to leave the revolver behind on this occasion, several civilians who were used to travelling on official duties in the mountains having told us it was safer to carry no arms.

A thick fog hung over Foca when the horses came to the door, and the ground was white with hoar frost. For the first hour and a half our way lay along the new road, which is being made from Foca to Gacko in

Herzegovina (and will be finished, we were told, in two years' time). Here we might have trotted the horses and gained time, as well as got a little warm, but the man who accompanied them was on foot, so we had to suit our pace to his, and, as it was chilly work riding under such circumstances, we walked too. The mountains were completely hidden from our view, and all we could see was the Drina river, whose banks we followed.

About half-past nine, however, our enterprise in starting under such adverse conditions was rewarded—the sun was equal to the faith we had put in him. Within a quarter of an hour, from the time that he sent his first gleams through the mist to cheer us, the whole scene was changed ; the fog lifted and dispersed in fleecy white clouds which drifted across the mountains, till peak after peak came into view, standing out against a deep blue sky, while their base was still hid in the river mists.

We had left the new road now, and were slowly ascending the mountains by a stony path, so narrow that two horses could scarcely pass ; far below us the river rushed over its

stony bed, and beyond the mountains rose again, wooded to their summits, with half the trees still clad in the golden autumn foliage, the other half leafless; yet the interlacing branches making a feathery mass of delicate grey hardly less beautiful than foliage.

Signs of human habitation were few and far between; only occasionally a heavily laden pack-horse passed us, with its owner in picturesque garb walking behind. Nor was there any sign of wild life, except a few ravens, birds very common in the Balkan mountains.

Lovely though the scene was, the keen air sharpening our appetites brought our minds to mundane things, and we began to look forward with pleasurable anticipation to a sight of the halfway house where we were to lunch and rest our horses. At last we sighted a white fort crowning a hill that must, we felt sure, be our goal. But no! Our guide said it was deserted, and still we went on. It was not till five and a half hours after leaving Foca that he pointed to a "Han" far below us (the road had been a sort of switchback ascending and descending by turns all the way)

as the rest house. The view at this point was strikingly beautiful: a flock of sheep grazed on the brow of the hill, tended by two shepherd lads, and this pretty group made a charming foreground to the panorama of distant mountains and tempted us to photograph it.

To reach the "Han" we had to cross the river by one of the many picturesque if rather rickety bridges over which the road is carried. It offered nothing in the way of refreshment but black coffee, so we were glad to have brought lunch with us, and picnicked outside in the sunshine while our guide enjoyed himself within. He was evidently anxious, however, to reach Suha before nightfall, and in less than half an hour we were again in the saddle, and none too soon, for the sun went behind the mountain before we reached the ravine we had come so far to see.

It was evident that, as it shines for such a very short time at this season of the year in this narrow valley, photographing would be impossible except just before and after noon; we therefore decided to stay two nights instead of one at the gendarmerie station, so as to be there in the middle of the day. The ravine

commences about an hour and a half before reaching Suha, and is worthy of its reputation. It will be the "Via Mala" of Bosnia when the driving road is finished. The so-called Turkish "road" by which we went, and which is the roughest of footpaths, where the horses often have to climb over boulders and sometimes go unpleasantly near the edge of a precipice, is here cut out of the face of the mountain at a height of three to four hundred feet above the river bed. Later on it descends so steeply that riding is impossible. At the point where a bridge crosses the river the scene is indescribably wild and grand; the mountains rise like walls on either side, their summits torn into crags and peaks similar to those we had seen in the defile between Mostar and Jablanica, and their sides clothed with virgin forest which hides (so we were told) the narrow entrances to some side valleys inaccessible to any but practised mountaineers, through which the men of the Black Mountains swooped down to rob and murder, in the turbulent times of the Sutjeska valley. We wondered if history would repeat itself in case the threatened war broke out!

Suha was reached a little before five, and we were very thankful to find ourselves in a scrupulously clean, comfortable room, where a fire was soon blazing in the stove. The whole station, indeed, was a model of cleanliness and order; if it is a fair sample of the gendarmerie stations in general they deserve the highest praise; as also does the system which provides so well for travellers in out-of-the-way places where there is no inn.

At the "Fremden Zimmer' (guest rooms) attached to the military casino, no provision is made for meals, but at the gendarmerie stations food is provided as well as comfortable beds, and there is a regular tariff for meals, which is hung on the wall, so that every traveller knows what he has to pay. The food, naturally, is of the simplest; but it was a treat to us to have it served in our own room instead of in a public one, where the air is thick with tobacco smoke, as is the case everywhere in Austria at the country inns. After the disorder and discomfort of the hotel at Foca the gendarmerie station of Suha was luxury.

I have wandered far and on many a shore, from the Pacific to the land of the Pyramids

THE GENDARMERIE POST AT SUHA

and the Sphinx and the borders of the far Soudan, but never has it been my lot to sleep in a more romantic spot than this little border fort in the Balkans. Darkness fell soon after we reached its hospitable walls, but then the moon rose and flooded the valley with silver light, and the ravine on which our windows looked had a weird fascination in the moonlight; it would have formed a fitting background for a scene in Dante's *Inferno*.

The "Wachtmeister" who commanded the little garrison of eleven gendarmes (strengthened at the time of our visit by the addition of three soldiers from the regular troops on account of the unrest on the border) came to our room by our invitation after supper, and from him we learnt much that was interesting of life on the frontier. We were surprised that there is no telephone between the different posts, the only communication being by the patrols which meet halfway. The men's duties are most various, for the peasants seem to come to them in all sorts of difficulties; they have alike to give assistance in illness when a doctor is far away, and to hunt down wolves or bears that have carried off the peasants'

sheep or goats. A not unimportant part of their work is to get in touch with the people and hear of any complaints or dissatisfaction which may be discussed at the wayside coffee-houses. As they always go about in twos, there is no opportunity for a single man to abuse his somewhat privileged position towards the peasants, and doubtless also the regulation of their working in couples is for reasons of safety.

We learnt from the Wachtmeister that, though we had seen so little wild life on our way, chamois and wild boars are plentiful around Suha, and the former particularly tame, as they have sanctuary in this district. The Government has set a price of Kr. 20 on the head of every bear and wolf killed in Bosnia, and our informant told us he had himself earned Kr. 40 in one day by killing two large bears (besides the value of their skins) when a peasant sent for assistance to protect his sheep, several of which had been devoured. This reminded me that I had heard of a tax on sheep and goats which weighed heavily on the peasants, and I inquired as to the amount, and learnt that ten heller (one penny) a year is

collected on sheep and fifty heller (rather less that sixpence) on the latter! The value of a sheep in Bosnia varies from Kronen 12 (ten shillings) to Kronen 20.

The sun shone in a cloudless sky next morning, but it was so cold in the shade in which the valley lay that we did not venture out very early; when we did, our first business was to inspect our fortified dwelling, which we had not paid much attention to when we arrived tired the previous night. Heavy iron doors closed the only entrance to the little courtyard, beyond which lay the house door; the wall of this courtyard, as well as the walls of the house all round, were pierced with loopholes for guns. Yet we did not think the place could have resisted a prolonged attack. In case of trouble, no doubt the two cows belonging to the establishment, together with the turkeys and cocks and hens, would be placed in safety inside the courtyard. In spite of its warlike aspect, however, the gendarmerie station of Suha is a most pleasant place, standing in a garden with a summer-house that must be delightful in warm weather; the men have also fenced about a little park and planted

it with trees and placed a seat at the finest point of view. The only other building near the station is a Turkish "han," where our man put up with his horses.

We walked to the end of the ravine on the Gacko side, and much wished to proceed as far as Cemerno at the summit of the pass, but had we done so should not have had time for photographing. The fortified barracks on the Cemerno pass are at a greater elevation (4000 feet) than any other garrison in the Austrian Empire, and the pass is the watershed between the Adriatic and the Black Sea. Were I to visit the Sutjeska ravine again, I would proceed into Herzegovina over the pass (three hours from Suha to Cemerno and another three to four to Gacko) instead of returning to Foca ; but we had made our arrangements and had to abide by them.

We looked in vain for traces of the two castles, said to have guarded the entrance to the ravine, on this side in the Middle Ages, and which, tradition says, were joined together in the legendary Duke Stefan's time by a hanging bridge ; but there seems no need of castles, for Nature herself has provided senti-

nels to keep eternal watch and ward in two immense pyramidical rocks, which rise to right and left of the foaming torrent of the Sutjeska.

The whole valley lay glowing in the mid-day sun when we retraced our steps to Suha, and so beautiful were the views at every point along the way, and especially when we crossed the river by one of the numerous wooden Turkish bridges, that our progress was very slow. The clear green water flowed between banks fringed with russet beeches and feathery golden willows; high above, dark fir forest clothed the mountain sides, and here and there some ancient fir tree had gained a foothold in the rock on a dizzy peak and was silhouetted against the blue sky.

Next day we bid "good-bye" to Suha! There was a delay in starting, caused by our man trying to make us pay for the horses' fodder, though he had agreed to include it in the price per day (a much higher one, by the way, than the natives pay); it was rather annoying, as we had risen early to try and reach Foca before dark; but we refused to be cheated, and he had to keep to his bargain,

though he did it with an ill grace and sulked all the day, walking far in advance of or behind the horses, so that he would have been no possible use in case of need. Alas for poor humanity, how such a trifling incident has power to mar one's mood! But after a little while the lovely scenery claimed all our attention, and by the time we reached the han, where the man insisted on stopping to rest and feed the horses, though we had done but two and a half hours out of nine, we were indifferent to his sour visage.

I overcame my scruples about the doubtful cleanliness of "hans" in general sufficiently to enter this one and partake of some black coffee; for the Bosian "coffee-house" is so essentially an institution of the country, curiosity compelled me for once to see the interior with my own eyes. It was a small room with an open fire, on which the coffee was boiled in little brass pots—one for each person—and another tall earthenware stove of the type peculiar to Bosnia, round which some peasants squatted. We were invited to sit on a broad wooden shelf covered with a mat, which did duty for a bed for several persons by night

and for a divan by day. Two gendarmes from Bastaci sat by the fire, with whom we were able to converse in German, and they told us such accommodation as the "han" offered was free, the "Open Sesame" to bed (such as it was) and fire being the purchase of a cup of black coffee at a cost of five hellers (one halfpenny). Assuredly travelling is cheap in Bosnia if you can fall in with the ways of the country! The gendarmes thought the "bed" would hold at least four people lying head to feet—bedclothes, needless to say, were not provided. It passed my understanding, however, how the "han" keeper could earn a living by the sale of halfpenny cups of coffee. He was a genial soul, and I liked his name of Omar, which brought the *Rubaiyat* of the Persian poet to my mind for the second time that day; for when I saw our lunch of a loaf of rye bread and a flask of red wine being put up, I mentally quoted:

> "A loaf of bread, a flask of wine—and thou
> Beside me singing in the wilderness—
> Oh, wilderness were Paradise enow!"

The East is still the East of Omar Khayyàm

—and Bosnia, though now politically Europe, is the Orient of the Prophet.

What a wonderful blue the mountains were on our homeward way! Neither in Switzerland nor Tyrol have I seen this colouring. We walked during the afternoon the better to enjoy the scenery, and we walked after sunset because our feet and hands became stiff with cold riding.

Foca was bathed in moonlight when we came to it, and its white minarets gleamed out against a starlit sky—the way *par excellence* to see a Turkish city is by moonlight!

XIV—TO THE SANDJAK

THE Sandjak of Novi Bazar was being evacuated ! Could we still get there before the troops left and witness the exodus ! Reports (even official reports) were conflicting—the air was full of rumours. The morning paper spoke of the uneasiness of the Albanians in the Sandjak as to their fate after the evacuation. In Sarajevo nothing was happening; indeed, the whole town wore a holiday air, though business went on as usual ; even the proclamation on the walls attracted little attention ; but everyone waited for news from the frontier, and to the frontier we went, trusting to our luck.

It was a superb morning, and as we waited for the train at the station of Bistrik, above Sarajevo, the beautiful city, with its multitude of minarets, lay beneath us basking in the sun's rays. Never had the city, which has been likened to Damascus for beauty of situation, looked fairer, for the mountains which

encircle it, as if they loved it, were in glorious apparel of russet and gold, decked like the beflagged city for a festival.

The train was very late, but who could grumble with such a view to look at? At last it came, no passengers in the first or second class but a few officers; civilians were not going towards the frontier.

We watched the beautiful city till the first tunnel hid it from our gaze, and we found ourselves in a mountain cañon where the grey walls of rock on either side were enlivened by vivid splashes of crimson foliage! What a railway is this that pierces the heart of the wild Balkan mountains! At one moment you are plunged into the darkness of one of the countless tunnels, the next you are enchanted by the beauty of some pastoral scene forming a background for a picturesque group of peasants; then again you find yourself hanging on the edge of a precipice with a mountain torrent thundering below and the cliffs rising in fantastic forms high above you.

But to-day the railway had another interest than its scenic beauty. At the first station the blue uniforms of the soldiers were con-

A WOMAN OF PLEVLJE (SANDZAK NOVI BAZAR)

spicuous ; the whole line from Sarajevo to the Turkish and Servian frontiers was guarded by military and patrolled night and day between the stations. No wonder ! For was not the great bridge across the Save river tampered with a few days ago by cunning hands which all but caused catastrophe to the one express train which connects faraway Bosnia with Budapest and Vienna ? We little thought of the reason when we crossed it so slowly ! The soldiers made a rush for our train which brought their rations. Poor fellows ! brought from their peasant homes perhaps in a few days to be shot at !

We reached Ustipraca without any disquieting incident, but in a chat with the station-master, while waiting for a carriage, he remarked that the people here were living on a volcano !

Darkness falls early in October in the Balkans, but the moon was kind to us, and rose like a great golden ball to light our way, which lay along the bank of the rushing Drina river. Like all Bosnian post roads, that which connects Gorazda with the railway at Ustipraca is excellent, and we had a comfortable

carriage, drawn by two stout Bosnian ponies, and a picturesque driver who wore a scarlet fez and was seated on a sheepskin. So we came to Gorazda and eagerly asked for news from the Sandjak. Could we get in ?

The officers of this little garrison town said "No." We were told the military post was stopped. Afterwards we learnt it was again running, but were warned that we ran a grave risk in proceeding, for guerrilla bands might be about. It was pointed out that we ourselves might be the means of war if we were attacked. All the women and children, twenty-five officers' wives and their families had left some days before, and the sick soldiers had been sent into safety ; no civilian was left in the Sandjak, and yet an Englishwoman would go there ! They did not say so, those courteous, kindly officers, but they thought us mad, I'm sure ; madness of this sort, however, is characteristic of our nation.

We went to bed, almost resolved to give up our plan and content ourselves with visiting Metalka on the border of the debatable land —at all events, we promised our military friends to ask the advice of the commander

of the garrison at Cajnica before proceeding further. The news next morning was not reassuring; orders arrived for strengthening all the garrisons, and we privately learned that there was graver news still. But, at all events, we could get as far as Cajnica! It was Sunday, and we could not send an important telegram before three o'clock, so it was late in the afternoon before we could start on our three to four hours' drive.

The people we passed on the outskirts of the town did not return our greetings, which seemed suspicious, as we remembered their friendliness on our previous visit to Bosnia. After we left the town behind this changed, however; the country people were smiling as of old, and stood up to salute us if sitting outside their houses—the quaint, whitewashed houses with high wooden roofs that are so very picturesque and very Bosnian. We passed a Turkish graveyard with turbaned gravestones on our left, and a little farther on another graveyard where the sign of the cross showed the faith of those who slept beneath. The Cross and the Crescent side by side, typical of this borderland where the

East meets the West and Moslem and Christian are neighbours.

The broad white road along which we travelled ran sometimes between meadows parched by the sun of the Orient, at others the woods hemmed us in on either side. An hour or so after leaving Gorazda we began to ascend through a wooded mountain gorge, and as we rose higher and higher we saw the way by which we came—lying half in shadow, the other half glowing in the afternoon sun—winding like a white ribbon through the valley far beneath. The setting sun shining through the yellowing leaves of the chestnut trees turned them to shining gold, silhouetted against the dark blue of the distant mountains. At the highest point of the road we reached a primitive wayside inn, where we stopped to water the horses and chatted to the innkeeper (who came from Bohemia) in the hope of getting the latest news from the Sandjak; but he knew no more than we did.

Dusk and then darkness fell long before we reached Cajnica, and although we knew the road was patrolled by troops, none were visible;

so in the disturbed state of the country we were not altogether sorry to see the first lights of the town in the distance. The minarets were illuminated for the feast of Bairam, and made a lovely picture against the clear, starlit sky. Our carriage drew up beneath a spreading tree before a long, low building which, even in the darkness, we knew must be the barracks from the number of soldiers outside, and we inquired for the commander, Captain ——, to whom we had brought a letter from our military friends at Gorazda. The captain was not at the barracks, and two soldiers with fixed bayonets were given us as an escort to go and find him.

"Was an armed escort necessary?" we asked in surprise. The non-commissioned officer said "Yes." The captain was not to be found, so we returned to the barracks and interviewed a youthful lieutenant, our first question being, of course: "Can we get into the Sandjak?" With boyish confidence he told us the road was as safe as any street in Vienna, being patrolled night and day by the military! Just then the captain (a handsome Servian, who is a blood relation of the murdered

King Alexander) arrived upon the scene and gave us a very different version; he had private information by telephone, which of course he could not reveal, but which made it inadvisable for us to proceed—he would not be answerable for our safety! The nice young lieutenant, with the pink and white face, quite nonplussed at the turn things had taken, saluted and walked away.

Quarters were found for us in the military Casino, for in the little garrison towns of Bosnia and Herzegovina it is customary to keep a guest room for visitors. While this was got ready we took supper at the inn in a smoky room which seemed to be the rendezvous of townspeople and officers alike. Here our picturesque captain joined us and repeated his advice, but the "Bezirksvorsteher" (civil head of the district) who arrived shortly afterwards was more optimistic and sympathetic with our desire not to lose such an interesting experience as to be the last civilians to visit Plevlje before the evacuation and its return to Turkish rule. All the officers present were introduced to us and *all* gave their opinion, and, as no two thought the same, we were no

wiser, and went to bed once more irresolute as to the morrow.

Everything possible was done for our comfort in our military quarters, and we were grateful to find a wood fire burning cheerily in the stove, for the autumn nights are cold in Bosnia, though the sun is hot at midday. Our windows looked upon a Turkish graveyard—a most romantic scene in the moonlight; the turbaned graves were just beneath and beyond, a white mosque stood out against the mountains with its minaret illuminated for the feast of Bairam. The "Bezirksvorsteher," who lived in the same house, warned us that our sleep might be disturbed by the Turks' midnight prayer, and bid us not to take it for an alarm, but so tired were we that we heard not a sound till morning, when I was awakened by the door opening and a soldier appearing on the threshold. He gave me quite a fright till I remembered that we had given orders to be called at half-past six and realised his pacific intention of lighting our fire and brushing our clothes. Communication was difficult, as he spoke only Hungarian, and signs failed to convey to him that hot water was wanted for

shaving, but here my spirit-lamp came to the rescue, and "kaffee" (coffee) and "brod" (bread) were within his vocabulary, so that he brought us both, and we neither had to resort to the not too appetising hotel nor start breakfastless.

Next morning the military post for the Sandjak arrived quite empty (we had been told it was questionable if we could get seats, and to travel by private carriage without escort would be more risky), and the temptation to go on was irresistible. So the die was cast, and we engaged places for the thirty miles to Plevlje.

Our spirits rose and danger was forgotten when we found ourselves really off, or if remembered it lent only a spice of adventure, for the morning was one of those peculiar to autumn in the mountains when it is a joy merely to be alive. The road led upwards through thick fir forests varied by the russet and gold of beeches. The scenery might have been anywhere in Switzerland or Tyrol but for the Oriental looking garb of the occasional peasants whom we passed, some on foot and some riding sturdy Bosnian ponies.

IN THE SANDZAK MOUNTAINS

The military patrols were so frequent we ceased to count them; at some points they were every half mile or so, and at others double or treble that distance, but as we neared Metalka there were sentries every few yards.

This little mountain station, which consists of a group of wooden houses surrounding the fortified barracks, will henceforth be the farthest outpost of the Austrian Empire on the Turkish frontier. There is a Turkish watch-house on the hill opposite the Austrian, and a short walk brings you within sight of the Black Mountains of Montenegro.

The officers of the garrison came out to meet us, for news of our coming had been telephoned by the military authorities at Cajnica; they made light of possible danger, as is often the case with those actually on the spot.

In ten minutes we were off again, and found ourselves actually in the Sandjak, that unquiet bit of Turkish Empire of which we had heard so much long before the political crisis gave it European importance. On the Turkish side of Metalka the military patrols were less frequent and the country grew wilder.

We still ascended, leaving the fir forest behind and crossing desolate mountain passes. A few cattle and sheep were trying to pick up a living on scanty herbage ; some peasants were reaping the meagre crops grown on stony ground, for harvest is late in these high altitudes. Some were threshing, driving horses round the threshing floor to tread out the corn in primitive patriarchal fashion.

The loneliness of the scene had a strange fascination, and away to our right, chain upon chain, rose the Montenegrin mountains, recalling to our minds, very forcibly under existing circumstances, grim tales of the warlike prowess of the fierce mountaineers.

The keen air sharpened our appetites, and an invitation to lunch, or rather dine (for mid-day dinner is *de rigueur* in Austria) with the officers at Boljanic was gladly accepted. Here all was life and movement, for the first luggage train had returned empty, and another was going out laden, some fifteen carts in each.

The road was all through the Karst after leaving Boljanic, but even the Karst was beautiful in the mellow sunshine of the autumn

afternoon, the bare brown hills aglow against the hazy blue of distant mountains. Gradually, as we descended, patches of wood became frequent; below us a little mountain stream watered the valley, and a few sheep enjoyed the fresh green grass along its banks. Two veiled Turkish women passed us on horseback, and then a venerable looking orthodox priest, with long white beard and high black cap—picturesque figures belonging to another world than ours, but not so picturesque as the Servian peasant women, clad in white and crimson-embroidered jackets, who delighted us as we approached Plevlje.

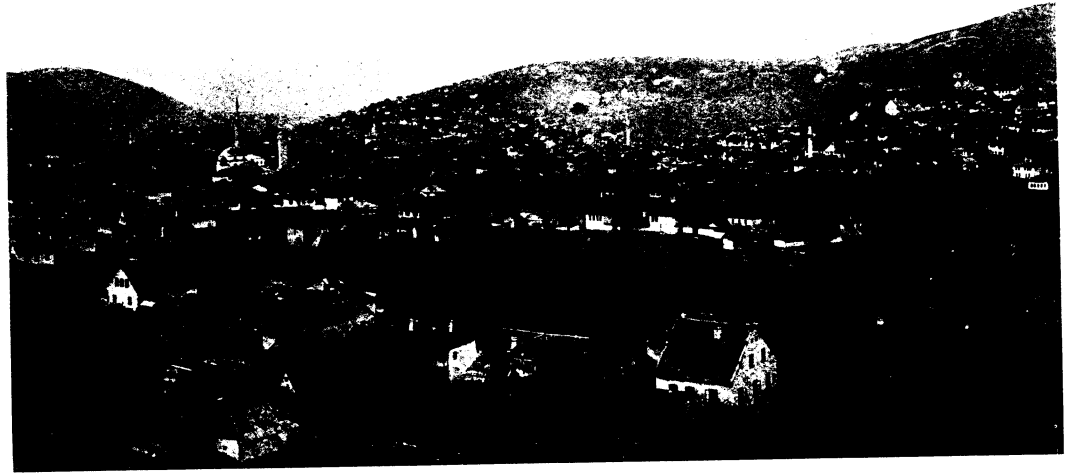
The white town, with its minarets, shone out long before we reached it, and signs of the evacuation were not wanting before we entered. Bugles were sounding, soldiers hastening here and there, and another long train of carts laden with every imaginable kind of luggage stood ready to start.

XV—IN PLEVLJE

AN adjutant sent by the general met us with the news that there was not a room in the town—not a furnished room, at least, for beds and bedding were packed, except those reserved for the officers of other garrisons, who were coming in with the troops on the morrow.

We might find quarters in the Turkish town! But——! and the adjutant shook his head! We replied that we would prefer to sleep on the floor in barracks; for in the Turkish quarters cleanliness was not to be expected, and safety was questionable in the excited state of the people, all the troops being withdrawn from the town. Even the consuls had moved into military quarters!

Yet somewhere we must find a roof to cover our heads; so after passing our luggage, consisting of one bag and two cameras, through the Turkish customs (where the officials were very courteous), we set off to



PLEVLJE FROM THE NORTH

see some private houses where rooms might possibly be found, guided by a soldier told off to carry our baggage.

But even in the Turkish town it was the same story—every European was on the point of departure; those who had formerly kept lodging-houses were no longer prepared for guests.

Happily just then, when we were contemplating a night in the open, we met the two Austrian consuls (one suffices for Plevlje in ordinary times, but for this crisis another had been sent from Constantinople), and with the invariable courtesy of officials of the Austro-Hungarian Empire they placed one of their own rooms at our disposal.

It mattered nothing that it was dismantled, the floors bare, the beds of a military hardness. It was clean and it was safe, for we were in the house where rooms are set apart for the officers' guests, and known as the "Fremdenzimmer."

Having found this anchorage, we proceeded to make tea, with the youngest of the two consuls, Count Drascovich, as our guest; and I believe this is the only time in my life that

I have entertained a distinguished visitor in such unconventional fashion, for one of our two teacups was broken on the journey, and the men had to drink out of tumblers, while our seats were the beds and a packing-case the table. There over the tea "cups" we discussed the political situation, and wandered from this to talk of Vienna and London, which the Count had recently visited. He was, by the way, the only person in Plevlje who spoke English.

The other consul then took us in tow, and with him we went to call on General von Rhemen, who gave us a cordial welcome, and expressed his regret that he was not able to do more for our comfort under the circumstances.

Supper at the military casino was an interesting experience; from eighty to a hundred officers who were seated when we entered rose, and remaining standing while we made our way to seats opposite the general at the central table. On this occasion, I must confess, I found Austrian courtesy a little overpowering; it was quite an ordeal to walk down the long room and bow right and left

as I made my progress, and as this was repeated twice a day during the day we spent at Plevlje, I had recourse to stratagem to escape so much publicity—sometimes coming early to get seated before many officers were there, and sometimes waiting to enter with the general, so that when they rose to salute him they might include me too. The Austrian officers have no "mess," as it is understood in the English army; the midday dinner is a table d'hôte, and supper is served *à la carte*, everyone ordering what he chooses, and paying at the end of the meal as at a restaurant. The charges are extremely moderate, and at Plevlje the food, though plain, was of excellent quality. In the dining-hall there were several tables; the consuls as well as the officers of highest rank sat at the general's table, the former opposite and the latter on either side of him. My seat opposite the general afforded me particular satisfaction, on account of the opportunity of hearing the situation discussed by the staff officers when telegrams arrived, as they frequently did during meals. It was an interesting study to watch the general's face when he received

them, and try to guess their import. The most exciting incident occurred a few days after our arrival, when the news was brought during supper that the Turkish barracks were on fire. Everyone in the room (excepting the general, his adjutant, and ourselves) rushed out on to the terrace which overlooks the town, from which the fire was distinctly visible. For a few minutes, I am sure, the thought was in all minds that this might be the signal for a general conflagration; but very soon we learnt that the fire, which had been in the stables only, was already out; whether it was incendiary or not we never learned.

The Austrian officers at Plevlje had a little world of their own outside the Turkish town —an European world girt about by gardens made with infinite labour by the soldiers who had brought soil from a distance, and so turned the bare rock into shady plantations. In the casino concerts were given daily, and every afternoon the tennis courts were a centre of life and gaiety, when the band played on the terrace.

The bells of the little Catholic church rang daily for matins and evensong, just before the

muezzins call to prayer—Christian bells in a Moslem land have a strange power to stir the emotions of even the careless Christian. To-day they ring in Plevlje no more!

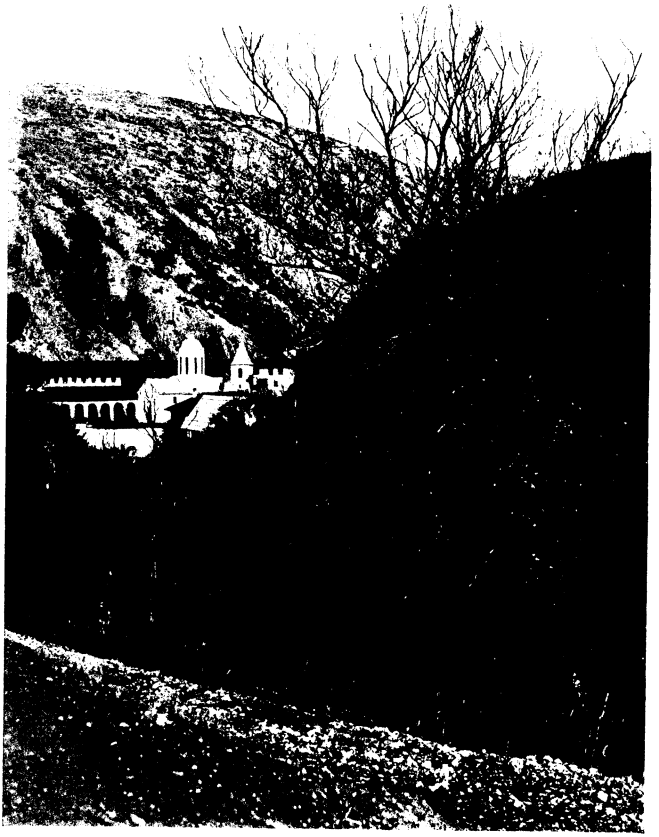
On the evening of our arrival, the two consuls escorted us to the Turkish barracks to call on the commander and officers of the garrison; the former spoke a little German, and the consuls translated our remarks to the other officers who were present. The room in which they received us was very bare, being furnished only with divans on three sides; we sat on one side, the Turks opposite, and of course we drank the inevitable black coffee, and everyone smoked but myself.

The ostensible reason of our call was merely the polite observance of a social custom, for during the feast of Bairam good Mohammedans, who have fasted all day, devote the night to feasting and exchanging social calls. But the real reason of our visit, or rather that of the consuls (for ours was prompted by curiosity to see Turkish military quarters), was to ascertain the truth of a rumour that the populace of Priboj had set fire to the

Austrian garrison after the troops left. The Turkish commander had heard nothing of it, but immediately telegraphed to find out; we did not, however, hear the answer till the following day, when the alarmist rumour—like many another in those days—proved to be without foundation.

Our hosts ordered the military band to play some Turkish music for our entertainment, and we afterwards went downstairs and saw the musicians, who were all seated on low divans in Oriental fashion. The tunes they played were melancholy rather than martial, and had a weirdness truly Eastern; the music had the curious effect of bringing the Nile scenery, where I last heard such strains, vividly before me.

Next morning a Turkish gendarme was awaiting our orders, courteously sent to act as our escort by our host of the previous night; the consul had lent us his dragoman to act as interpreter, and the latter had engaged a native to carry the heaviest of the two cameras. So we set out to see the town on photographic thoughts intent, and doubtless with such a retinue appeared in the eyes



LANDSCAPE NEAR PLEVLJE, WITH ORTHODOX MONASTERY IN DISTANCE

of Plevlje as distinguished strangers of no small importance. Very soon, however, we dropped all this state and ceremony, for the dragoman we found to be superfluous, the gendarme speaking sufficient German to understand what we wished him to convey to the natives (chiefly requests to allow us to photograph them, and not to stand at attention during the process), and being also quite ready to carry the camera. The third day of our stay, when he did not appear, we ventured alone to the Servian monastery, some distance outside the town, and found the country people so friendly we had no more fear of unpleasant incidents, and thenceforward went alone on all occasions.

Plevlje is a town of 9000 inhabitants, with a population half Servian, half Turkish, among the latter being some Bosnian emigrants, who left their country at the time of the Austrian occupation, and have their own quarter.

Seen from the east, looking towards Montenegro, the town is very beautiful. Seven white minarets rise from among the red and brown roofs of the houses, and are conspicuous from the distance. Not less charm-

ing, though less extensive because the mountains on the opposite side are nearer, is the view of the town from the terrace of the military casino, framed in by the trees of the surrounding plantations. On close approach the town offers nothing of architectural interest, though there are some picturesque bits. But the people are the real interest of Plevlje, and we saw them out in crowds the day after our arrival to welcome the new Governor, who had come from Salonica to succeed Suljman Pasha (the old Turkish Governor, who had ruled over the destinies of the Sandjak during the whole time of the Dual Control). Both men and women are often remarkably handsome, and there is considerable variety in the costumes, for, besides Turks and Servians, Albanians are not infrequently seen in the streets of Plevlje. The dress worn by the Servian women here, of creamy woollen stuff made with a short kilt below the waist, edged with embroidery and worn over an underskirt, is quite different to that of Bosnia, and pleased me greatly. The very first photograph we took in the Sandjak was of a good-looking young woman in this

A BIT OF PLEVLJE

picturesque attire standing beneath what the Turks call the Sacred Tree, though another story has it that the first Austrians who entered Plevlje were hung on it in 1878.

We had been warned to expect unfriendliness, if not hostility from the people, and especially that in their present frame of mind it might be dangerous to try photographing them. But our experience was quite contrary to this; none objected, many purposely stood still or deliberately posed to assist us, and some even asked us to take their pictures. The Turkish troops also were very pleased to be photographed at the review on the arrival of the new Pasha, who, by the way, made a very good impression on us. He is one of the "Young Turks," and had been a staff officer at Salonica previous to his appointment as Governor of the Sandjak.

He will need to be a strong man to keep order in the Sandjak, for, even with the support of the Austrians, his predecessor, Suljman Pasha, was sometimes afraid to punish crime. I was told some tales of the latter, on good authority, which showed criminal weakness. My informant stated that about two years

ago a young Turk was taken prisoner in the mountains by fanatical orthodox Christians, who tried to force him to kiss the cross; on his refusal they cut off his nose and ears, afterwards imprisoning him, and finally—as he remained obdurate—they killed him, and the murderers went scot free.

Another story illustrative of Suljman rule related to a young Montenegrin girl, who loved and was beloved by a Turkish soldier, and left her home to join him, but was overtaken by her parents before she reached Plevlje, cruelly beaten, and forced to return with them. She ran away, however, a second time, and reached the Turkish barracks, where she begged to become a Moslem and marry the man of her choice. The Turkish priests were willing to receive her as a convert to Islam, but not so the Suljman Pasha, who saw an opportunity of winning popularity for himself with the orthodox population; so he sent the poor girl back with an escort of zeptiahs, and the story ends with her death, whether from a broken heart or ill-usage I cannot say! Yet this was the charming cultured man whom all travellers who met

him united in praising, and many Austrian officers told me was a delightful person socially —a typical Turk of the old school; vastly different to his equals and to the people he ruled.

"Are the people glad the Austrians are going?" I asked our zeptiah (Turkish gendarme) one day. He had grasped the fact that we were English and not Austrians, so he gave a candid answer: "Half the people work for Austrians; when they go, no money!" This expressed the situation.

Property at Plevlje depreciated in value immediately the order came for evacuation. Natives who made money during the Austrian régime, and invested it in houses of European build which they let to the officers, have them now standing empty; for the Turk rents no house. He lives in his own, though it be but a hovel. Shopkeepers have no one to buy their wares, and workmen who have lived on Austrian pay for more than a generation no one to work for! And this is the case wherever there were Austrian garrisons.

The army of occupation in the Sandjak Novi Bazar consisted of 2000 men; two

battalions were stationed at Plevlje, one battalion lay at Prjepolje, a company and half a company each at Metalka, Boljanic, and Jabuka (the half-way station between Plevlje and Prjepolje). The work done by the Austrian troops is certainly very creditable, for they have made good roads across the country where formerly there were but rough forest and mountain tracks often blocked by fallen trees. They have planted trees and gardens where there was nothing but bare rocks, and the interest the officers and men took in their gardens is the more remarkable when you think how short a time they were likely to enjoy them, owing to the frequent changes of the regiments, and therefore laboured for the most part for those who would come after.

The garrisons of Pribov and Prjepolje were withdrawn and the whole forces concentrated at Plevlje when we were there, and we witnessed the march-in of the company from Prjepolje (not a few dogs, among them some lovely collies, were marching with the soldiers).

A colossal work, indeed, is the evacuation of an army which has occupied a country for thirty years! Nothing like what we witnessed

has been seen in Europe for a generation, if ever, save in time of war!

One of the most curious sights was the destruction of the old uniforms—the whole army had been given new ones for the march. The old ones could not be left, or the whole population of Plevlje would be clad very shortly in the Austrian uniform, and one can imagine the confusion that might occur if the populace so garbed rose and crossed the Bosnian frontier! Moreover, military regulations strictly enjoined that each uniform given to the flames should be accounted for, so a squad of soldiers was at work cutting a small piece from each garment as evidence of its destruction.

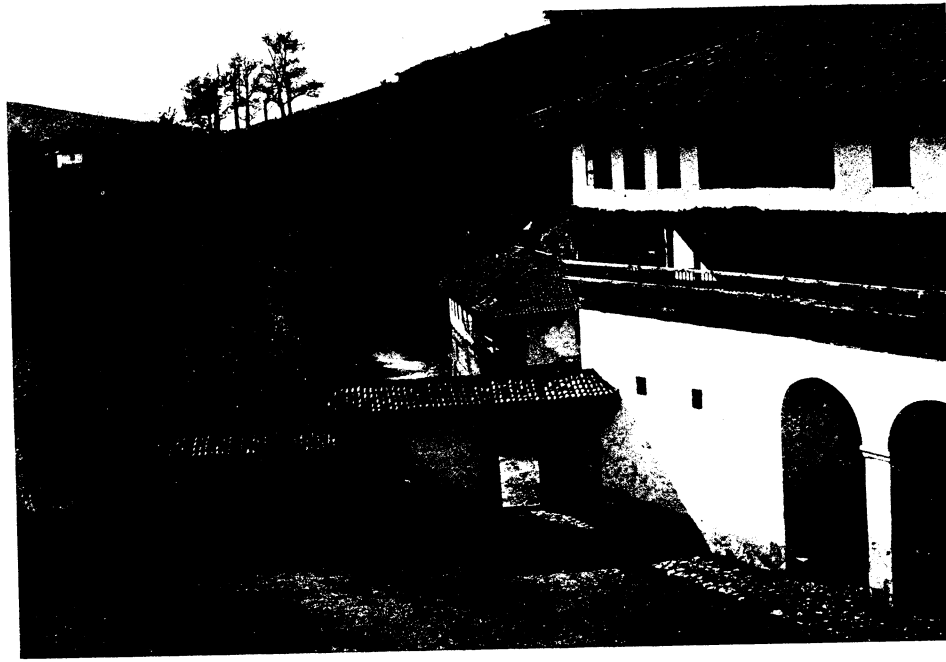
Everywhere in the streets of the Turkish town was furniture from the officers' houses or the casino. We saw a billiard table sold for a few pounds because it was too heavy to carry away, and yet one convoy after another went out laden day by day.

More than once during our visit to Plevlje we found our way to the old Servian monastery, half an hour's walk from the town, which nestles in an idyllic little wooded valley in the

hills. Living as we were in military quarters, where all was excitement and the air full of war's alarms, it was a pleasant change to seek this restful spot, with its old-world atmosphere.

The monastery dates from the thirteenth century, and is picturesquely built round a great central courtyard, with a tiled roof faded by wind and weather to the shades of autumn leaves ; a wooden gallery supported on arches runs all round the building, and is reached by an outside staircase. In the centre of the courtyard is a little whitewashed church worth visiting, for the interior walls are covered by curious paintings dark with age, and permission can be obtained to see a very ancient bishop's staff and silver-bound copies of the Gospels. Alas ! the priest who showed them to us one day spoke only Servian, or we might have obtained some interesting information about the monastery and its inmates.

We went for two days to the Sandjak and remained nine, as the chaplain and many of the officers begged us (when we were fixing the day of departure) to remain over the following Sunday for the last mass at the Catholic



SERVIAN MONASTERY NEAR PLEVLJE

church before its destruction, and the services on the following day in the military churchyard, and we consented.

It is hard to say which ceremony was the most impressive and most touching! I felt something like personal grief for the little church whose fate was sealed—it was sad to hear the bells ring for the last time. Many churches are built but, thank God, few destroyed! Yet it were better for those who loved it to reverently lay it low than to leave it to possible—nay, probable—desecration.

It was a glorious autumn morning on which the last mass was celebrated within its walls; the sun gleamed on the white robes of the priest as he read the gospels for the day on the steps before the entrance, on the golden foliage of the acacia groves that surrounded the church, and on the brilliant uniforms of the officers and the shining arms of the two thousand troops assembled for the last act of worship in and around the sacred building.

There was but little sunshine for the Requiem Mass, and perhaps it was more fitting that Nature's mood should be in keeping with that of the soldiers, who were leaving com-

rades or loved ones behind. An altar was erected in the centre of the churchyard (which is on the bare hillside), and candles, lit by loving hands, burnt upon all the graves. Before the altar bareheaded, with bowed heads, stood the general and his staff, and beside it a little group of men, women, and children, whose black garments showed recent bereavement. The bands played funeral dirges—solemn, soft, and low, and many eyes were dim. This is how the Austrians bade farewell to their dead !

By remaining for these two ceremonies we had lost the chance of seats in the post, for it was taken by the military for the removal of the sick from the hospital, so we had to engage a private carriage and take our chances of travelling without escort. It was not without difficulty that we secured a carriage at all, and we did not feel quite comfortable about the forty miles' drive over the mountains in the unsettled state of the country ; there was, however, no choice of routes or means, and every day increased the difficulties of getting away, for the few tradespeople left in the town, who had stayed to the last to pack their

goods, were securing every available vehicle in their haste to place themselves and their wares in safety before the troops left. So, in spite of tales told us by the officers of carriages being days on the way and drivers stopping half-way to demand extra money, we ordered our conveyance for an early hour the following morning.

We were not to travel alone, for a half-grown grey kitten, who had been the soldiers' pet at the "Fremdenzimmer" and attached herself to me since my arrival, would be left to starve, I knew, when the army had its final marching orders, so I decided to take her with me.

We stayed late at the casino that night, for there were many "good-byes" to be said, and though we had lived among the Austrian officers for but little over a week, the circumstances had brought us into more intimate relations with them than a month would have done elsewhere. There is no term in the English language that quite expresses the social atmosphere of an Austrian military casino ; among these officers there was a cordiality, a geniality, a good-fellowship that is

summed up in the German word so often used to describe the social life of Vienna and equally fitting here—"Gemüthlichkeit."

It was with real regret we shook half a hundred kindly hands, and with a cordial hope to meet, some of them at least, again that we said "Auf Wiedersehen."

XVI—THE RETURN FROM THE SANDJAK

THE day of our adventurous journey dawned darkly. Heavy snow-clouds hung over the mountains — the prospect was not reassuring. The orderly came and lit our fire at a quarter to six, for we meant to start warm at least, though probably no amount of wraps would keep out the cold on the bleak mountain passes that lay between us and Cajnica. We had ordered the carriage for seven, that being the latest hour at which our Kurd driver was willing to start, for he evidently feared to be benighted before reaching our destination.

But somehow it was nearly eight before we got off, what with dressing and packing and making tea, for we had to wait for the milk, which our orderly fetched daily from the military casino where, for some reason we never could understand, as everything is astir very early in camp, they always kept him waiting.

We could have done without milk, but not so our adopted kitty, who was watching our preparations with anxious eyes. At least I wanted her to start with a good breakfast, but after all she refused it, seeming to know some crisis in her kittenish life had arrived, and being too concerned thereat to have any appetite.

My heart misgave me when I thought of her terror when she found herself imprisoned in a basket and jolted all day in the darkness towards an unknown destination ; but I had to be cruel to be kind, so I remorselessly bundled her in, in spite of her protests, and carried her down to the carriage, turning a deaf ear to her pathetic mews, which presently grew to loud "miows" when we started ; but after a while she resigned herself to her fate and forgot her sorrows in slumber.

A few last handshakes and "Good-byes," and we were really off! Up the hill between the groves of acacia trees that are all round and about the Austrian quarter, what a changed scene from the day of our arrival, when all had been bustle and confusion ! Now everything cleared away—the thousands of wooden

THE MAIN STREET IN PLEVLJE

packing-cases that were then strewn about already on their way to Bosnia, the soldiers no longer busy packing as if their lives depended on the speed with which they did it, but standing about in their new uniforms ready for the march towards home.

I have said we were really off, but before we were out of the town our poor little horses came to a full stop and refused to take the hill. It seemed a bad beginning, when we thought of the thirty-three miles before them, and the steep ascent to Metalka. Visions of having to sleep on the road or in some doubtfully friendly peasant's hut came before us. Would that we had taken the post! But the driver's whip prevailed, though it made our hearts bleed for the overworked, half-starved horses; they described a complete circuit, nearly overturning the carriage, but to our relief they went on, for well we knew the chance of getting another carriage was more than doubtful, and we had already paid our driver half of his fare in advance, and every seat in the post was engaged days ahead, besides which, the order might come any day to reserve it for the military.

We turned at the top of the hill, by the new barracks which show, as well as the new roads, how unpremeditated was the evacuation of the Sandjak, to look our last at Plevlje. What will be its coming fate ?

The desolate road was guarded by numerous patrols, especially near the town ; we passed three within the first mile. Farther on they were less frequent. The roads and bridges we noticed were either being mended or had newly been put in order to prepare them for the heavy guns passing over when the troops left.

The old Turkish road—more a mountain track than road—sometimes ran alongside and sometimes crossed ours. The natives, who travel chiefly on horseback, take it in preference to the post road made by the Austrian soldiers along which we drove. The Servian population here wear woollen scarves wound round the head and over the ears, even in summer, but to-day they had hoods of coarse white woollen stuff attached to coats of like home manufacture for still further protection against the cold, which was piercing. My feet and hands were soon numb, in spite

of two pairs of stockings and two pairs of gloves, and a warm rug tucked over the former. The sudden change from the warm weather of the previous week was particularly trying.

It took us an hour and a half to reach Gotovusa—the white barracks were visible on a height long before we got there, and we wondered why they were not painted a less conspicuous colour—where we stopped at the barracks to telephone to Captain —— at Cajnica that we were on our way and hoped to arrive before nightfall. Two little obelisks here record the names of the regiments who have garrisoned this outpost.

On again for another hour or so, still ascending, and now we saw the first traces of the snow we had heard was lying deep the previous day at Metalka. The bushes by the roadside were a network of white lace; snow lay by the roadside in patches, but soon we saw more of it; clouds of mist and melting snow enveloped us as they drifted across the mountains. The hood of our carriage gave us partial protection, but pussy's basket on the front seat had none. I tried holding it on my lap, but the rain and snow beat in. At

last a happy thought struck me—the greasy paper in which our sandwiches had been packed! Grease keeps out wet effectually. The buttery paper formed a roof which the raindrops could not penetrate, and puss slept snug and dry within.

As we put mile upon mile behind us the dangers of the road seemed less. We were more concerned with the elements than with a possible attack. The fog grew thicker, the damp cold more penetrating; there was not a sign of life, but here and there the roof of a peasant's hut looming ghost-like through the clouds, and a few ravens—birds of ill-omen in keeping with the weird scene—sitting on a fence.

Glad indeed were we to reach Boljanic! The officers at the garrison gave us a warm welcome, and insisted on our joining them at their midday dinner! I really do not know whether the warm rooms or the hot soup were most acceptable! My kitty, too, came out of her basket for refreshment, and was less frightened in a strange place than I feared. I take this opportunity of saying I was very much touched at the kindness and hospitality

displayed to us at all the garrisons in the Sandjak at a time when our newspapers were bitterly hostile towards Austria.

The commander, Captain ——, who was a good amateur photographer, very kindly gave us several photographs of Boljanic, among them one of Suljman Pasha's arrival there on his flight from Plevlje.

The sun broke through the clouds just as we finished dinner, and my husband seized the opportunity to take a photograph of our picturesque driver. We were a little afraid he might offer objections (for the Count had told us he was a fortune-teller who wrote charms for the peasants against the Evil Eye, so it seemed not improbable, as he presumably believed in it, he would fear it for himself), but he was well pleased and, I think, flattered at being immortalised.

The Muktar (Mayor) of Boljanic, a splendid looking old Turk, was among the lookers-on, and permitted me to handle and admire a wonderful old knife in an ancient silver sheath which he wore in his belt. We longed to take his portrait also, but time pressed, so it was arranged that the captain, who had already

photographed him, should exchange with us—a picture of the Muktar for one of the Kurd.

About an hour after leaving Boljanic the fir forest begins, which reaches as far as Cajnica. The points of the first trees were visible from afar, while the lower branches and trunk were hidden in a thick mist—a most curious effect. As we got nearer we saw that the branches of the trees were festooned with snow, and it was nearly a foot deep on either side of the road—and this was on October 21st! Here and there among the dark fir trees were golden birches which had not yet lost their leaves, and we longed for the sun to show us the glories of the woods in their mingled autumn and winter attire.

We had passed several baggage trains on our way, and it was always a tight squeeze to get by; but just before reaching Metalka one waggon was broken down, and the road completely blocked. Great excitement prevailed, and the scene was most romantic: Austrian soldiers with fixed bayonets standing on either side the way to guard the baggage; in the foreground Turks and Servians discussing the

situation, and for a background the dark forest!

Somehow the baggage cart was moved sufficiently to enable us to squeeze by once more, and this time we were on the edge of a precipice.

Metalka was our next stopping-place. Before coming to it we drove for fully an hour through virgin forest where the trees had tall straight stems like the pillars of some cathedral aisle. Our carriage stopped at the frontier before the Turkish customs, and our pass was demanded and given up with some trepidation, for we had forgotten to get it *viséed* in Plevlje; but fortunately all went well. Still, I did not breathe quite freely, for some one had told me of a law forbidding live animals —horses and dogs, at any rate—to be taken into Austria. What about cats? I displayed a bit of pussy by partially lifting the lid of the basket, first to the Turkish and secondly to the Austrian customs-house officials (for the former are almost as strict about what you take out of their country as what you bring in). I do not know whether the law-makers left cats out of their calculations, or whether

my little pussy's pretty face pleaded for her, but she was allowed to enter Austria without any trouble! We crossed the boundary beneath the great hanging bar that marks the frontier line, and the most dangerous part of our journey was over; we had left the Sandjak Novi Bazar, and were back again in Bosnia —the new province of Austria-Hungary. Metalka will henceforward be the farthest outpost of Austria-Hungary on the Turkish frontier. We took tea with the officers in the fortified barracks that command the pass, and they would hardly let us go, so we had to telephone to Cajnica that we should arrive an hour later than we expected.

If Metalka were in Switzerland or Tyrol it would be much sought after as a health resort both in summer and winter, for it lies at a height of 4000 feet above sea-level, surrounded by virgin pine forest, and has the high mountain climate. I was glad to learn that a small hotel is to be built there next year. Skeeing and tobogganning are the favourite amusements of the officers of this little garrison in winter, varied by shooting parties when the wolves, that are still plentiful in

OUR DRIVER FROM THE SANDJAK

Bosnia, grow troublesome, and the peasants ask for help to protect their flocks. Some of the fir trees in this region are veritable giants, rising, with tall straight stems, to an immense height. We were sadly disappointed to lose all this beautiful scenery through the fog, and promised ourselves to go up again from Cajnica if it should clear the next day.

It was really surprising how fast our little horses went from Metalka to Cajnica. The road descends in serpentine windings all the way, but remembering our start, I had not expected the poor beasts to have so much strength left at the end of the day. It was very dark in the woods, and seemed a likely place to be attacked if any marauding bands were about, so we had the revolvers ready. But we reached Cajnica in safety, rather inclined, as one often is when a danger is passed, to laugh at our fears, and especially at our mistrust of our wild-looking Kurd driver, with whom we were now good friends. In fact his leave-taking was rather embarrassing, for he lingered by our fire so long I feared he would never go, and, to my dismay, pulled out a long Turkish pipe which he filled with

strong tobacco, evidently without the least idea that he was doing anything incorrect in filling our bedroom with the fumes—nor could we find it in our hearts to remonstrate! He went at last, saluting us by touching forehead, mouth, and heart. "What the heart feels, that the head thinks and the mouth speaks," was the significance of his gesture; and though we did not understand his words, we knew that he bid us a kindly and gracious "good-bye."

XVII—CAJNICA

AS we had arrived at Cajnica in the dark and left it very early the next morning, on our way to the Sandjak, we got only a vague impression on our first visit of a little town surrounded by mountains which seemed from our bedroom windows to rise like a wall of rock behind houses.

I knew, however, that Cajnica was famed for its beauty, as well as for its pilgrimage church, which is known far and wide and visited by the orthodox population of Montenegro and Turkey as well as by that of the whole of Bosnia; therefore I was sadly disappointed to find on waking the morning after our arrival from Plevlje, that the storm we had driven through in the mountains had pursued us, and snow lay nearly a foot deep upon the ground. Going out was out of the question, as I had only summer clothes and light shoes with me, suited to the warm

weather of ten days previous, when we had left the bulk of our luggage behind at Sarajevo.

The kitten objected to the snow as much as I did ; it was the first she had seen, and nothing would induce her to venture out in it ! However, I consoled myself with the remembrance of similar storms in the Swiss mountains, even earlier in the season, which was followed by glorious weather, and settled down to write my impressions of the previous day's adventures with kitty on my lap. But this was after we had surmounted the difficulty of getting breakfast, which proved to be no slight one, for the Hungarian orderly told off to look after the military "Frendenzimmer" (guest room) at Cajnica spoke only his native Magyar, and was not quick at understanding signs.

He interpreted his duty towards us, after lighting the stove, in scrupulously brushing, with not too clean a brush, not alone our boots and travelling wraps, but every one of our personal belongings, and I had to forcibly rescue some of them from his well-meaning hands. The breakfast difficulty was finally

CAJNICA

solved by the aid of a policeman (the police office being in the same building), who sent our man to fetch fresh rolls, milk and eggs from the inn, while I made the tea. We had in the end quite an excellent repast, for delicious rolls are obtainable everywhere in Bosnia, and on this occasion we not only warmed them on the stove, being in a luxurious mood born of our cosy room and the snowy vista seen from the window, but had plenty of butter, which we had brought from the casino at Plevlje, and butter is not an article of everyday consumption in Bosnia, as it is all imported from Austria. The poor Bosnian cows give little milk, and that of such inferior quality it has hardly any cream. No wonder, for, like the hard-worked horses, the cattle get but little to eat; the former, however, are the worst off, for they carry their heavy wooden saddles, or rather packs (on which wood and other things are fastened for transport) through life; the peasants never having been accustomed to remove them, cannot see the cruelty of leaving the poor animals day and night so burdened.

But I am wandering far from Cajnica. We

saw nothing of the town that first day, except the village street, along which we made our way, in spite of snow and slush, to the inn, for our midday meal. We dined off soup, followed by the meat that went to the making of it, and a kind of apple pie that is known all over Austria as "apfelstrudel." Cajnica cannot be congratulated on its inn, but doubtless better things will come in time.

Though the acute political crisis was practically over before we left Plevlje, the news was still exciting enough to make us look eagerly for the papers, so we greatly appreciated the use of the reading-room belonging to the casino, which was kindly accorded to us here as at Plevlje. This gave us the opportunity of meeting not only the officers but also the civil officials, with whom we had many interesting talks about things Bosnian. On this particular afternoon I found a paragraph in the Sarajevo paper stating that packs of wolves had appeared in the country near Banjaluka, and a remark on the subject led to my being told what had happened to an unfortunate shepherdess a few months previously not far from Cajnica.

Two sisters were with their flock in the mountains and lost ten sheep during the night. Both started off in search of the truants, but one sister lost her footing on the edge of a precipice and fell into the chasm beneath; the other hastened to the nearest peasant's hut for help, and led the rescue-party by another path to the foot of the cliff down which her sister had fallen. There the poor girl lay dead. By a strange coincidence, not far from her were the bloody remains of one of the sheep she had lost her life in seeking; of the other nine the wolves had left nothing! Such stories tell their own tale of the hardships and dangers of a Bosnian peasant's life in the mountains, which, nevertheless, he loves as well as the Swiss his native Alps.

We hoped for sunshine the following day to disperse the half-melted snow and enable us to take some photographs; but though no snow fell, and the clouds were a little lighter, there was only a very slight improvement in the weather. Our orderly had brought armfuls of wood in the previous night, of which we now understood the reason, for he did not appear to light the fire, and we guessed had

been sent off on duty. We soon had a blaze roaring up the chimney, and sent the policeman to the inn for breakfast. It was funny to see this grand individual, with a scarlet fez and sword clanking by his side, gravely carrying in the coffee and rolls and two boiled eggs in a newspaper parcel; no egg-cups were provided nor any salt! Later in the day the weather cleared sufficiently for us to visit the Orthodox Church, which is dedicated to the Virgin and her wonder-working picture painted, according to local tradition, by St. Luke (whom, as I have related elsewhere, the Bosnian monks believe to have lived at Jajce). The picture was brought from the monastery at Banja in the Sanjak Novi Bazar some four hundred years ago by the great Vizier Ghazi Sinan, who was himself a native of Cajnica. Why he should have plundered a monastery and stolen the sacred picture, only to give it back to the Orthodox Church at Cajnica, is a riddle; possibly the reputation of the picture was so great that even the Mohammedans were a little superstitious about it, and being uneasy about the sacrilegious deed he found this the easiest way to salve his conscience. Be that as it may,

MARKET PLACE, CAJNICA

Cajnica became a celebrated place of pilgrimage from this time on, and no one who is in Bosnia on the day celebrated by the Orthodox Church as the Festival of the Virgin, August 28th, should miss going to Cajnica to see the thousands of pilgrims who assembled here from all the countries that once formed the Servian kingdom. The painting is in Byzantine style—that is, all that can be seen of it, for the piety of generations has kissed away the features of the Virgin, so that little more than an outline of her features remains. A representation of St. John the Baptist is painted on the back of the wood on which the sacred picture is painted, the whole being in a very ancient and valuable frame.

The miraculous picture was formerly in the old pilgrimage chapel beside the modern church, completed about twelve years before the Austrian occupation. The older building, like the Servian church at Sarajevo, is partly underground, the reason of this being that the dimensions above ground permitted for a Christian church in Moslem lands during the Middle Ages were so small that the only way to secure the necessary height for the interior

was to sink the building in the earth. This gives the little Christian churches a humble crouching appearance, which doubtless the Turk thought fitting to a place of worship of the despised "rayah," a word universally used for the Christian in Turkish times, which implies that the man so designated has forfeited his life, and is only permitted to live at the pleasure of the "true believers." The gloomy little chapel has still some votive offerings hung on its walls by pious pilgrims of the past, among which are the curious leather belts of great weight and thickness which were formerly universally worn by the women, and are still occasionally seen.

I was told they were placed here by the widows of murdered men, who had tracked down the murderers with their dead husbands' pistols in these belts, and after avenging the slain, hung them here in the church.

It is a place of many memories, this little Christian church, which kept alight the flame of Christianity in a Moslem land throughout the centuries of Ottoman dominion, and worthy of being more carefully preserved for the sake of its past.

The new church is symbolic of the greater tolerance towards Christianity of the nineteenth century. When Sultan Medshid allowed this prominent building to be erected between 1857 and 1863, the knell of Moslem rule had already sounded in Bosnia, though it was not till fifteen years later that it passed into the occupation of a Christian power.

Both churches stand in a roomy court, surrounded by a wall which doubtless was built for protection in former times. The buildings around the courtyard are for the accommodation of pilgrims; but once, at least, they had other tenants, for when the Austrian troops vacated the Sandjak, they slept at Cajnica, on the march to Sarajevo, in the pilgrims' quarters at the Servian monastery.

The present pilgrimage church is in Eastern style, with no less than fourteen little cupolas on the roof; the interior is somewhat bare, and besides the famous picture, only the pulpit and bishop's throne and the offerings brought from the old church hung on the screen are interesting.

The same great Vizier who brought the miraculous Madonna to Cajnica, and thereby

made his birthplace famous amongst the Serbs, erected its finest mosque for his own place of worship, and rests beside it with his wife and son. The pilgrimage church and the proud Vizier's mosque representative of the Cross and the Crescent have changed places. Once the mosque was the prominent feature of Cajnica ; to-day it is the great white church upon the mountain-side, and so it is in Bosnia with the faiths they represent.

Cajnica is proud of its "Appelquelle," a spring of delicious water that rises in the mountain-side above the pretty town, where a little terrace has been built from which to enjoy the view. The spring is named after a former Governor of Bosnia, Baron Appell, who seems to have won his way (as also did his wife) to the hearts of the Bosnian people, who erected the fountain that encloses the crystal water. The finest view of the town, however, or at least that which we preferred, was from the road which climbs the hill through the forest to Metalka. In sunshine it must be exquisite ; but the elements were not kind to us at Cajnica, and though we waited patiently four days for weather pro-

mising enough to risk the eight hours' ride over the mountains to Foca, and a lady's saddle, kindly lent me by one of the officers' wives, was sent specially from Gorazda for my use (there being none procurable at Cajnica), we had at last reluctantly to give up this long-planned tour. Perhaps we might have waited even longer, but in this instance the civil officials as well as the officers were against our taking this road, owing to the rumours of Montenegrin bands on the frontier. In fine weather we might have laughed at their fears, but to risk being captured by brigands in a drenching rain or possible snow-storm—that was too much for us!

So we returned over the road we had come to Gorazda; alas! but not all of us. I left my kitty in the kindly care of the wife of the "Bezirksvorsteher" at Cajnica—not without a pang, for the gentle little creature who had been my constant companion in such stirring times had won her way to my heart, and but for the long journey that still lay before us, I would have taken her home to be an English cat, and remind me of the wild Sandjak where I found her.

XVIII—TREBINJE AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

THERE are three ways of approaching Trebinje—by train from Hum, a station between Mostar and Gravosa, where the line branches off, or by road either from Gacko to the north or Ragusa to the south.

My first visit to Trebinje, when I reached it by the last of these three routes, I have described very fully in my book on Dalmatia. It is a drive of from three to four hours, part of the way along the coast. From the height to which the road ascends before turning inland the distant view of Ragusa and the wooded Isle of Lacroma is exquisite. Later on you traverse the barren Karst, but the shape of the mountains are very fine, and early in the morning and just before sunset the grey rocks take on lovely colourings.

The road from Gacko to Trebinje is likewise through the Karst, and as the distance is

CATHOLIC GIRL OF HERZEGOVINA

great—fifty miles—it would only be taken by travellers anxious to visit the most out-of-the-way parts of the country, which are untouched by the modernising influence of the railway : to such I would recommend the road, or rather bridle-path, from Suha in the valley of the Sutjeska to Gacko over the Cemerno Pass on horseback, and then by post or private carriage to Trebinje. This wild road leads along the Montenegrin frontier, and old Turkish and modern Austrian forts are frequent. Gacko is a tiny town that has been forced, by its strategical position, into playing an important part in Bosnian history, and has many tragic memories of the insurrection of 1878. The hero of that time, Bogdan Zimunic, is still living here, and has tales to tell to those who understand his native tongue of more engrossing interest than any fiction.

But Gacko is also of great interest to antiquarians, on account of the wonderful early Christian gravestones in its neighbourhood, which throw light on ancient Servian usages and history. Hunting scenes are depicted upon some of them, and men in single-handed combat upon others. Horses are frequently

represented, for the old Bosnian knights dearly loved the trusty steeds which carried them to battle, and a good horse is the most prized possession of a Bosnian Beg to this very day.

From Gacko the military post goes three times in the week as far as Bilek ; there is a daily postal service on to Trebinje connecting with the post cart from Gacko, so it is not necessary to stay a night on the way.

The Trebinje of to-day is a strongly fortified Austrian garrison town, which on first approach makes no appeal to the lover of that which is old-world and picturesque ; but within the modern quarters which encircle it is Trebinje of history, with its ancient walls and strong towers that bid defiance to its enemies in the stormy Middle Ages.

The town was known as Trebunia, or Travunia, under the Romans, and ruled over by a Slav prince at the time of Constantine. In the fourteenth century it formed part of the dominions of the Count of Chlum, which were annexed by the Bosnian Ban Tvrtko, who proclaimed himself "King of Bosnia and the Coastland."

After the Turkish conquest the town rose

to no small importance, for it was the first station on the great high road from Ragusa to Stamboul, along which so much costly merchandise was carried from the Adriatic to the Orient. As it was also a very vulnerable point, owing to its proximity to the Ragusan and Montenegrin as well as the Venetian frontiers, fortresses and watch-towers were erected on all the surrounding heights for its protection.

Some of the Turkish forts are still standing, others have been replaced by modern Austrian ones, for the vulnerable point of the Turkish Empire in the Middle Ages is the vulnerable point of the newly acquired dominions of Austria to-day, and the armies of Franz Joseph guard Trebinje in the present political crisis even more jealously than did the armies of the Sultan during the bloody wars with the men of the Black Mountains. That the value of strategical positions alter little in the course of the ages is shown by our garrisoning Egypt just as did the Romans.

On our first visit to Trebinje, in the spring of 1906, we were very kindly entertained by Lieutenant-Colonel von Lilianhof, at that time of the Trebinje garrison, and heard from him

and from his wife a good deal about army life in the Herzegovina. The tropical summer is so trying that, as with us in India, the officers' wives are all sent away during the hot months —indeed, there are many points of resemblance between the Austrian officers' lot in Herzegovina and that of the British officer in India. Both are exiles, though certainly the Austrian is a great deal nearer to his beloved Vienna than the Englishman to London. The semi-tropical climate of Trebinje has been wisely utilised by the present Government for the cultivation of the tobacco plant and the vine, and model vineyards and orchards were planted at Lastva, a mountain valley about eight miles from Trebinje, in 1892, which have met with great success and are well worth visiting. In order to get the best results, Hungarian vintners were brought from the famous vineyards where the juice of the grape is converted into Imperial Tokay to teach the people of Lastva the art of vine culture and wine making. Cherries, pears, peaches, and apricots all flourish in the peaceful fertile valley, which is now reached by a good driving road from Trebinje, but was, before the Occupation, so

A FRUIT MARKET

cut off from the outside world that it was one of the most lawless parts of Herzegovina, where border fights with the neighbouring Montenegrins were of constant occurrence. It is said that the inhabitants of Lastva were paid by the Turkish Government to keep the border, and were so busy fighting that the fruitful land lay barren under the old régime.

The Lastva of to-day is the seat of a local government department (Bezirk), and has, besides the inevitable gendarmerie post of the frontier, a small military post, schools, and some houses which are used in summer by residents of Trebinje.

One of the most interesting excursions in this neighbourhood is to the Popovopolje—in summer a fruitful plain, in winter an inland lake; it is easily reached by a good driving road from Trebinje. These periodically disappearing lakes are peculiar to the Karst, and where the waters come from and whence they go remains a mystery. It seems, like the overflow of the Nile, to be nature's provision for watering and enriching the soil of a rainless stony country, for the waters of the Popovopolje leave a deposit of mud which

acts as a manure. A peculiar thing about this particular Karst lake is that the low-lying swampy land seems to have no ill effect on the health of the population living around it, for the Popovopolje is one of the healthiest districts in Herzegovina, in marked contrast to the very similar district of Gabella, near Metkovic.

The Popovopolje (or rather the villages around it which nestle at the foot of the bare surrounding mountains) have a population of about 5000 persons. The lake is twenty miles long when the waters are at their height, and from forty to over a hundred feet deep. Not unfrequently, when the wind blows down from the mountains, quite high waves are seen, and it is not pleasant to be caught on the lake in a small boat on such an occasion. I was told that but one kind of fish, called "gaovice," is caught in the Popovopolje, and that it is esteemed by the natives as a great delicacy. The gaovice is hardly as large as a sardine, and perhaps for this reason the fish manage to squeeze through the holes through which the water rises, where their larger brethren would stick fast. Possibly as Herzegovina advances

in civilisation, under the new régime, someone may erect a fish cannery on the banks of the Popovopolje, and introduce to the world of gourmands a new finny delicacy that will cast our old friend the sardine in the shade.

Antiquarians will find the banks of the lake a happy hunting ground, for it abounds in ancient burial places, which are often called Bogomile graves; but the orthodox priest, Iguman Mihajlovic, who studied them when superior of the monastery in the district, says that many of the stones bear the signs of the cross, which it was not the custom of the Bogomiles to use. Nor are the gravestones all that show that this district was of importance in past times, for more than one ruined castle crowns the surrounding heights, and the tumuli tell the story of a still earlier occupation.

Another natural curiosity is the Vjetrenica cave. The entrance is in the mountain-side, about a hundred feet or more above the level of the lake, so that the waters never reach it; the interior bears traces of human habitation at some former period; figures are roughly depicted on the walls at the entrance, which

probably were meant to represent knightly heroes of the Middle Ages, for they are wearing helmets and bearing swords ; a cross shows their Christian origin. In an inner cave, some hundred and fifty yards from the main entrance, fragments of iron vessels and animal bones are to be seen ; it probably served the cave-dwellers as a kitchen.

At the village of Zavala, in the Popovopolje, is a very interesting old Servian monastery, standing high above the banks of the Trebinjcica ; yet not so high but that the waves of the lake wash against the rocks on which it is built during the winter inundation. The library contains some interesting old manuscripts and rare books in the Turkish and Servian languages, and the monastery seal is shown, which bears the date 1271.

It is well worth while to make an excursion from Trebinje by carriage to Ragusa Vecchia, near which are the ruins of Gradina, about which the following legend is told.

When the Venetian Republic was at the height of its glory, Ragusa Vecchia, like its greater namesake, was an independent state, ruled over by a young princess who was

A MUEZZIN

famed for her beauty far beyond the borders of her kingdom. Needless to say, she had many lovers, but she most favoured a young engineer, and promised to marry him if he could bring fresh water from the hills to her tiny capital.

This the young man set himself to do, and in time accomplished. The day was fixed on which the waters should be released and flow for the first time into the town. Unfortunately for the ardent lover, in a spirit of mischief he introduced a harmless snake into the pipe, thinking it would cause fun to the onlookers when it came out at the other end. Little did he dream of the consequences of his joke! The princess came in person to the opening of the new aqueduct to do special honour to her lover. So great was the force with which the pent-up water rushed out at a given signal for its release, that the imprisoned snake was thrown against the royal breast, and the princess, not knowing the reptile was harmless, fell fainting to the ground and died of fright.

XIX—FROM SARAJEVO TO BOSNA BROD

FEW are the travellers who break their journey between the capital of Bosnia and the Hungarian frontier of Brod, but there is much that is worth seeing, by those who are interested in the development of the country, at some of the intermediate towns along the main line and on its branches.

Here, more than anywhere else in Bosnia, industry has made strides, and though factory chimneys occasionally spoil the landscape, there is satisfaction in the thought that they mean greater prosperity to the people.

Vares, for instance, at the terminus of a branch line going off from Podlugovi—a station about fifteen miles distant from Sarajevo—is the centre of a flourishing iron trade. The mines are worked by the Catholic population, for mining is foreign to the nature of the Turks, who were content to let the rich

A GUZLA PLAYER

mineral treasures of Bosnian mountains lie buried for the most part. Yet even under Moslem rule the Christians of this district worked these mines in a primitive fashion, using the same methods that their forefathers had done for hundreds of years, and so great was the reputation of the iron ore that it was sent not only all over the Balkans, but even into Asia. Under the Austrian régime modern methods have been introduced at Vares, and two large iron foundries erected by the Government give work to a whole township that has grown round them.

At Zenica, on the main line, there are "Landesararische" (Government) coal mines and steel works. A model convict prison on the progressive system, where the prisoners are taught trades and work on the land, is one of the sights of the place. Fruit culture on a very large scale is carried on, all the work of planting and cultivating the orchards being done by the prisoners. Yet in spite of industry and the modern buildings, something of old Zenica remains in the green gardens surrounding the Turkish houses and the slender minarets that rise from among them.

Usora is another important industrial centre. It is the end station of the Usora railway, a private line owned by a company who export wood from the great oak forests of the Usora valley : under a contract with the Government the line owned by this company will, in time, become state property and probably be extended to Banjaluka.

The Austrians have introduced the cultivation of beet-root for sugar-making into Bosnia, and in 1892 a large sugar refinery was erected at Usora, in which many hundreds of refugees from Russia, chiefly Chekhs, are employed. The company owning the sugar refinery also have a large stock-breeding establishment. At Doboj another branch line goes off to the coal and salt mines of Dolnja Tuzla. I have said there is much to see in this district for those interested in the industries of the country, but there is also much worth seeing here from quite another point of view, that of the travellers whose interest lies mainly—as I confess does my own—in its scenic beauty and historical interest. The oldest Franciscan monastery in Bosnia, at Sutjeska, and the ruins of the famous old royal castle of

Bobovac are easily reached from the station of Kakanj-Doboj, and both are worth a visit ; a driving road goes to Sutjeska, but Bobovac can only be reached on foot or on horseback.

The monastery was founded in the fourteenth century by the first Franciscan monks that found their way to Bosnia, but only the church remains of that period, for the other buildings were destroyed by fire in 1658 and rebuilt six years later, as a Latin inscription on the west door testifies. It is marvellous that one stone remains upon another of those placed there by the founders, when you recall how often fire and sword have swept this land in the course of six centuries.

History relates that after the Turkish conquest of Bosnia in 1464 and the destruction of the neighbouring castle of Bobovac, the monks of Sutjeska by some means procured a document from the Sultan promising them protection ; this sufficed for their safety for a time, but did not save the monastery from molestation in the following century, when the fanatic zeal of the Bogomiles who had gone over to Islam under the leadership of the then governor, Hassan Bey, destroyed one re-

ligious house after another; Sutjeska was plundered when Fojnica, Kresevo, Visoko, and Konjica were utterly destroyed. In the monastery archives chronicles of one of the monks, by name Fra Bona Benic, exist which give a graphic account of the trials that overtook the brotherhood in the period that followed the reverse of the Turkish armies before the walls of Vienna. The unfortunate Christians in the realm of Islam then suffered for the success of their fellow Christians in Europe.

For sixteen years the monastery was deserted, while the monks wandered in the mountains, sleeping in caves or in the open, disguised as peasants; but still at hand when sought for to administer the rites of religion in secret to the fast diminishing Catholic population.

The monastery church of St. John the Baptist, on the right bank of the Trstivinica, claims the proud distinction of being the first Christian church in Bosnia to possess a belfry and have the privilege of calling its worshippers to prayer by the sound of the sacred bells, while yet under Ottoman rule. An inscription commemorates this great conces-

sion granted in the year 1860, at a time when the ringing of church bells was still fraught with dire penalties. "When the Turk hears the sound of a church bell then is his anger kindled against the Christians," was a saying typical of popular feeling in those days.

Visiko is a place that has historic associations of special interest to all travellers who have visited Dalmatia and become enamoured of the romantic history of Ragusa, for it was here in 1335 that the representatives of the proud little republic, received from Ban Stefan Tvrtko the privilege of free trade in the Orient; nor is this the only connection Visiko has with Dalmatian history, for some fifty years later King Stefan Ostoja here confirmed the privileges of Zara and Sebenico.

From Visiko, a driving road leads to another interesting old Franciscan monastery at Fojnica, which has an idyllic situation and possesses in its archives, a Firman of the Sultan Mahmud II, which was the charter of freedom to worship the God of the Christians for the Franciscans under Ottoman rule. An equally interesting document in the monk's library is an ancient book of heraldry containing the

names and arms of all the Bosnian nobles who left the country on account of the Turkish invasions or adopted the religion of the conquering race, and in so doing dropped their family names, but preserved the tradition of the nobility. In spite of so many valuable documents being lost in times of persecution, the Franciscan monasteries of Bosnia are still a happy hunting ground for the lovers of rare volumes and old missals, and the monks delight to show them to appreciative travellers.

An interesting book might be written about the feudal castles of Bosnia—so numerous are they, so stirring their history, and nowhere more frequent than between Sarajevo and the Hungarian frontier at Brod. Those who delight in such relics of the past, should drive or travel by the military post from Usora to Tesanj and see the ancient strongholds of the Bans of Usora, famous alike for its picturesque position, on an almost inaccessible rock, and for its stirring history. This castle shared the fate of Jajce, being conquered by the Turks in 1463 and retaken by the Hungarian king, Mathias Corvinus, in the same year; but its final conquest by the armies of the

A BOSNIAN GIPSY

Sultan was eight years previous to Jajce's final fall; some of the breaches in the massive walls may have been made when it was besieged by Prince Eugene, who took it on one of his many raids against the Turks.

The castle of Maglaj, which crowns a rocky height, is a striking object from the train, and is in particularly good preservation. Maglaj boasts too a very fine mosque, and is so picturesquely situated that it is well worth while to break your journey there, if only for a few hours; and if you are an artist or photographer, with an eye for picture-making, you will certainly find that a day is not enough to devote to it. The town has tragic memories of the insurrection of 1878, which an obelisk erected to the memory of the Austrian soldiers records, and is strongly garrisoned to-day for the protection of the great bridge across the Bosna river. Not far from here is the battle-field of Kosna, where the insurgents were defeated on August 4th, 1878; another memorial of that time is at Doboj, where a great iron cross is erected on a height at the entrance to a mountain ravine to the memory of those who fell in the battle near that town

where the Austrians, under Count Szapary, defeated the insurgents under the Mufti Taslidza.

Doboj has preserved its mediaeval character almost intact; from the height on which its ancient castle stands there is a wonderful view that well repays the exertion of the ascent. To the east you look across the river to the forests and mountains of the Spreca valley: to the west one mountain-chain rises behind the other till the snow-capped peaks of the Vicija and Vlasic-Planina near Travnik bound the horizon. There is another view from a height along this line which is strikingly beautiful, and can be enjoyed from the train when you reach the station of Han Marica, at the watershed of the rivers Save and Bosna; and after this the train gradually descends to the plain in which Dervent lies, reaching to the banks of the Save. This whole district, I was told, was one great lake during the insurrection in the autumn 1878 to 1879, but the old quarter of Dervent which then existed is built on two little hills, and rose above the flood; the new houses are in the plain, and would fare badly if the same

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conditions occurred again. From Dervent to the frontier at Brod is but a distance of sixteen miles, and at the intermediate station Sijekovac the Save river is reached, which there forms the boundary between Bosnia and Hungary.

Brod is a little town with two mosques, a Greek orthodox church, and two monuments, one of which records that the Austrian army here entered Bosnia on July 29th, 1879, and the other the visit of the Emperor Franz Joseph in 1885. Its only importance lies in it being the terminus of the narrow-gauge Bosnian railway at its junction with the Hungarian lines.

Here we crossed the great bridge across the Save river, and bid a regretful "Good-bye" to beautiful Bosnia, which will have henceforth a place in our affections second only to its sisterland of Dalmatia.

THE END

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